



the weekly Standard

MARCH 28, 2011 • \$4.95

ONCE MORE UNTO THE BREACH

MAX BOOT: Qaddafi must go
THOMAS DONNELLY & GARY SCHMITT:
No substitute for power
WILLIAM KRISTOL: The party of freedom
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Sources: *The Economic Impacts of the Oil and Natural Gas Industry on the U.S. Economy*, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, September 2009 (Sponsored by API); *The Distribution of Ownership of America's Oil and Natural Gas Companies*, SONECON, September 2007 (Sponsored by API)

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Vive Sarkozy

THE SCRAPBOOK was polishing off a plate of freedom fries the other day when it had a sudden, and slightly shocking, epiphany. Now that the West has, at long last, bestirred itself to support the Libyan resistance, credit goes to the energy and perseverance of one statesman in particular, and one statesman only: President Nicolas Sarkozy of France. We repeat: Sarkozy of France.

While everyone else in any position to rescue the Libyan resistance from annihilation at the hands of Muammar Qaddafi dithered and rationalized and counseled despair, France recognized the rebels in Benghazi as the legitimate government of Libya, and Sarkozy was insistent on the need for military action. He was met with incoherence from Washington, opposition from Berlin, and resolute irresolution from NATO, G8 colleagues, and the European Union. When the United Nations Security Council finally voted to authorize a no-fly zone last week, it was Sarkozy and his foreign minister, Alain Juppé, who led the charge. President Obama, to his credit, put America on board—but only after Sarkozy and France showed the way.

American attitudes toward France, and vice versa, are immensely variable, and the historic relationship between our two countries is com-

plex. Yet in recent years, in particular, it has become a popular article of faith—from late-night comics to op-ed strategists—that France is not only a feckless European power (“cheese-eating surrender monkeys”) but an “ally” we could just as well live



without (see aforementioned freedom fries). This is not just misguided, but unfair to France.

THE SCRAPBOOK says this with due deference to the fact that France—to paraphrase General de Gaulle—has always had a certain idea of itself and delights in the occasional contrarian behavior. But temporary irritants

shouldn't obscure the larger truth, and the fact is the United States has good reason to be grateful to the French. It was the support of France, and in particular the French Navy, which secured American independence from Great Britain in 1781; and it was the French Army, especially on the Marne (1914) and at Verdun (1916), which held the line—at appalling cost—against Germany in World War I, and made the Allied victory in 1918 possible. In more recent times, America and France fought on the same side in World War II, in Korea, and in the Persian Gulf war, and there is a substantial contingent of French troops in Afghanistan.

It should also be said that, in 2003, when President Jacques Chirac opposed our invasion to liberate Iraq from Saddam Hussein, he was not two-faced about it, arguing against the Bush administration at NATO and the U.N. And unlike the Turkish government, or Gerhard Schröder's Germany, or Vladimir Putin's Russia, once the fighting began Chirac's France did not actively undermine American efforts. Now that circumstances are, more or less, reversed—France leads, America follows—we owe it to Nicolas Sarkozy's courage to fight the good fight on behalf of the new Libyan government in Benghazi, and win. ♦

DAVID SMITH

Turning a Blind Eye to Union Violence

THE SCRAPBOOK marvels at the impressive ideological discipline the media have displayed in dropping all of the sermons on political civility it was so intent on delivering after the shootings in Tucson in January. Specifically, reporters have been loath to mention the violence and death threats associated with the Wisconsin labor protests. Signs comparing Wisconsin governor Scott Walker

to Hitler were de rigueur among the protesters in Madison. One protester was caught on tape screaming “Hang them all!” There were numerous “ironic” references to the controversy over Sarah Palin's alleged “targeting” of Representative Gabrielle Giffords, who was shot by a mentally ill man of no coherent political ideology. One such sign had Walker's photo in crosshairs with the word “RELOAD.”

All of Wisconsin's Republican state senators have by now received death threats, including a missive that read

“you will be killed and your families will also be killed.” One state senator had a note shoved under his door reading “The only good Republican is a dead Republican.” Another had the windshield of his car smashed and nails spread across his driveway. Interestingly enough, at least one GOP legislator was threatened by a fellow legislator: Wisconsin Democratic representative Gordon Hintz shouted “You are f—ing dead” to Republican Michelle Litjens.

University of Wisconsin law pro-

fessor Ann Althouse, who has blogged extensively on the showdown in Madison, received a profanity-laced “manifesto” threatening her and her husband. A conservative blogger tracked down the author of the missive only to find he was a sporadically employed dishwasher who claimed to have once been a member of the venerable Wobblies, but alas his union dues are not currently up to date. Unfortunately, given the labor movement’s historical record of violence, such threats can’t be laughed off.

Naturally, unions are self-righteously claiming the moral high ground. AFL-CIO head Richard Trumka is not above capitalizing on the anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.’s assassination. “Join us to make April 4, 2011, a day to stand in solidarity with working people in Wisconsin, Ohio, Indiana, and dozens of other states where well-funded, right-wing corporate politicians are trying to take away the rights Dr. King gave his life for.” We were previously unaware of the fact that the advocate for nonviolence had died so that bus drivers in Madison, Wisconsin, could earn \$160,000 a year, but okay.

Trumka himself is not much of a spokesman for nonviolence. In 1993, the labor leader called for a United Mine Workers strike, encouraging strikers to “kick the [expletive] out of every last one of ‘em.” When the strikers shot and killed a father of three for crossing a picket line, Trumka told the Associated Press, “If you strike a match and you put your finger in it, you’re likely to get burned.” The union defended the workers implicated in the killing and fought the wrongful death lawsuit brought by the victim’s widow in court for over four years.

By any standard, this raft of threats is newsworthy, but oddly we have not seen the Zapruder-like analyses and rivers of ink spilled that we did when a Tea Party protester supposedly spat upon a congressman last year. If a Democrat (allegedly) bleeds, it leads. When a Republican is threatened, well, perhaps it’s overdoing it to interpret the media’s silence as amounting to complicity in the threat. But for the

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The LEADER of the FREE
WORLD, The PRESIDENT
of the UNITED STATES!



labor movement’s radical fringe, the mainstream media’s *omertà* is enabling all the same. ♦

Power to the People

We were copied this week on an amusing email, whose sentiments we wholeheartedly endorse, sent by our Connecticut correspondent Linda K. Dwyer to the busybodies at Northeast Utilities, her electric company:

“To whom it may concern,

“I am in receipt of your letter today announcing that I have managed to come in dead last out of all my 100 neighbors in [using] energy [efficiently]. This communication is probably

well-intentioned. I would advise you to remember that the Road to Hell is paved with good intentions.

“As I have understood our contract with your firm for the past 36 years that I have lived in this area, my job is to pay my bills on time and in full. If you will check your records for the past 36 years, you will see that I have fully complied with my end of the bargain. I thought your job was to supply my energy. I was not made aware that your job was to ‘instruct’ me in energy saving efficiencies, or to track my progress vis-à-vis my neighbors.

“I find this to be offensive and intrusive. Beyond that, it is just plain dumb. Guess what! I am the only all-electric home in the neighborhood! Moreover, not that it is any of

your business, during the period from 11/10/10-2/12/11, I was baking cookies (2 ovens) nonstop for 500 deployed soldiers (Connecticut Cookie Platoon—Google us), had 8 house guests for 10 days and yes, we are on well water, and then hosted a large party for New Year's Eve. Moreover, many of my neighbors had gone to Florida, or out of state for the holidays, etc. What I do with my energy use is no one's business but mine.

"As well, your 'suggestions' for energy efficiency—the Hazmat-requiring [compact fluorescent] light-bulbs, turning off lights when I leave a room, and using energy efficient machines in a home office (I don't have one)—are beyond stupid. This kind of indoctrination has been going on in schools for the past 10 years at least, and we are inundated with it nonstop on television. . . .

"But here is a question I hope to ask at your next rate increase session. How much energy did you use to produce this hogwash and distribute it? Hmmmm? Not to mention the poor dead trees upon which to print it all.

"Please remove me from your studies in the future. I do not wish to judge my behavior by that of my neighbor. And please transmit this letter to the highest person in your organization that will bother to read it."

Our correspondent was a guinea pig in what Northeast Utilities touted in January as an "innovative Home Energy Reporting pilot program" scheduled to last for a year. We'll let you know if she receives a response. ♦

Another Book from Brooks!

Following on his acclaimed *Bobos in Paradise* and *On Paradise Drive* (both based primarily on work he did in the office next door to THE SCRAPBOOK while a senior editor here at THE WEEKLY STANDARD), David Brooks, having moved down-market to the *New York Times*, has now produced a third book, *The Social Animal: The Hidden Sources of Love, Character, and Achievement*.

As you'd expect, the book is original, imaginative, and thought-provoking. It's also a good read. So when you're finished with Andrew Ferguson's *Crazy U*, pick up *The Social Animal*, pour yourself a libation, and prepare to enjoy "the happiest story you've ever read"—the lives of Erica and Harold, the novelistic characters Brooks has created as vehicles for conveying his research in modern neuroscience. Prepare, as well, to consider the lessons Brooks wants to teach us about our inner mind, our social relationships, and how we can—and ought—to live together.

And for those SCRAPBOOK friends who think Brooks has a bit of a soft spot for our current president: Fear not! Barack Obama is mentioned only once, in passing, in the entire book. ♦

Helen Thomas Makes Her *Playboy* Debut

THE SCRAPBOOK has to admit it hasn't looked at *Playboy* in years—not even for the articles. And the feature interview in April's issue strikes us as a good reason to continue that policy. Helen Thomas, whose splenetic rants on Israel and the Jews provoked her sudden departure from Hearst and the White House press corps, is back with a vengeance to, as *Playboy* informs us, "set the record straight."

The excerpts released from the interview don't improve her image at all, as Thomas rails against the powerful "Israeli lobbies" and complains about the Jewish members of Congress and their "anti-Arab" sentiments. More entertaining, though, is her answer to the question of whether she has "lost her mind":

"I resent that question! I thoroughly resent it. Why are you interviewing me if I'm crazy? It wouldn't be worth it to you, would it?"

As Charlie Sheen has shown, being crazy is more of an asset these days for an interview subject than a disqualification. Thomas would have done better to let people wonder whether she's an anti-Semite than to open her mouth and remove all doubt. ♦

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The War on Strunk and White

Be clear, they said, and, by God, clarity is what they got. Sentences that zinged by like bullets—*bang*, a shot rings out, and *bang*, the man at the bar with a whiskey sour slumps over dead, and *bang*, the lights go out, leaving nothing much to notice, except the screaming.

They hated conjunctions and sentence adverbs, did Strunk and White, our lucid boys, our apostles of a briefer gospel. “Omit needless words,” demanded *The Elements of Style*. You remember the book, of course. A 1919 writing manual from an English professor named William Strunk Jr., mostly forgotten until his famous student E.B. White revised the text in 1959, added his name to the front cover, and sold over 10 million of the things—mostly to people needing going-away-to-college presents for their nieces and nephews. Who eventually grew up, got jobs, worked for 20 years, and discovered they remembered little from school except that they ought to buy the book for their own college-bound nieces and nephews.

As it happens, I love all those complicated conjunctive phrases that Strunk and White despised: *in the event, however, whereupon, and yet*. I love the way they feel at the beginning of a sentence—the way they grease the slide from one phrase to another, with an unctuous nod toward the structures of logic as they slip by. For that matter, passive constructions are used with glee by most of the writers I admire. Which would be a telling point against Strunk and White’s commandment “Use the active voice,” except that the pair don’t actually seem to know what active and passive voices are.

Neither, as far as that goes, does George Orwell, whose 1946 essay

“Politics and the English Language” invariably gets itself mentioned somewhere in discussions of writing. Strunk and White were after a lean and sharpened prose; a sort of literary purpose is what they had in view. But with his own attack on the passive, Orwell was hounding a different fox: the way language can be used to erase the agent who caused the events a sentence is ostensibly describing. *Mistakes were made* being a classic example.



For such obscuring purposes, the passive voice is only one of many devices, and not a particularly good one at that: What, exactly, is unclear about *The crash was caused by the pilot’s error*? Cloudy agency and the passive voice are like circles in a Venn Diagram with only a small arc of intersection, but writing manuals have taught several generations of students to equate passives with obscurity—and, surprisingly often, to believe that a passive is any sentence with the verb *to be* in it.

“Avoid the use of qualifiers,” “Put statements in positive form”—all such Orwellish, Strunk-and-Whiteian rules can seem a little silly. A little small-hearted, and a lot susceptible to misuse. Besides, they partake of a kind of

sympathetic magic: Eliminating the occasional accoutrements of bad writing won’t rid the world of bad writing—unless you expect a ban on red leatherette barstools to halt the consumption of bad whiskey sours.

All that said, something in the recent war on Strunk and White has begun to put my back up. *The Elements of Style* is an “obnoxiously ignorant little book,” the linguistics professor Geoffrey K. Pullum announced on January 24—a text matched only by Orwell’s “overblown and dishonest essay.” On January 21, the *Financial Times* dismissed Strunk and White as a product of the Cold War, “that disciplined, buttoned-down, and most self-assured stretch of the American century.” In his new book, *How to Write a Sentence and How to Read One*, Stanley Fish airily waves off Strunk and White as the faded avatars of the old middlebrow consensus: the middle-class elitists of a world gone by.

And in that context—in the midst of an assault on the old definitions of good writing—can’t we stop and admit that, all in all, these were reasonable guides? Last night I pulled down from the shelves, for the first time in years, that little blue book my uncle had given me as I was packing for college. Brittle pages, foxed edges, and a clean confident belief that writing, after all, is meant to express something.

“Prefer the standard to the offbeat,” Strunk and White insisted at the end of *The Elements of Style*. I could never quite obey that kind of dictum myself; prose has always seemed to me a vast and inarticulate ocean, tossing wave after wave of words against the shore in the hope of washing down to sea a flotsam bit of meaning. But, hell, the fact that we can’t live up to an ideal doesn’t mean it isn’t an *ideal*. A praise-worthy goal. A truth that keeps us honest with ourselves.

JOSEPH BOTTUM



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Qaddafi Must Go

Better late than never, the United States and her allies finally have acted to stop the slaughter in Libya. With strong American, British, and French support, the United Nations Security Council on March 17 approved a Lebanon-sponsored resolution authorizing member states to use “all necessary measures . . . to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack” in Libya.

Only hours before, Muammar Qaddafi had been issuing blood-curdling threats, promising to go “house by house, room by room” and vowing “we will have no mercy and no pity on them.” Yet as soon as the U.N. resolution passed, Qaddafi’s foreign minister announced an immediate cease-fire—although there were reports that offensive operations were still continuing.

Qaddafi may be a “mad dog” (as Ronald Reagan called him), but he is also shrewd and ruthless enough to have held on to power for 41 years. His ruthless streak has been on ample display in recent weeks as his armed forces have been on a rampage through rebel-held towns. Now we are seeing his pragmatic streak—the same instinct he displayed in 2003, after the U.S. invasion of Iraq, when he suddenly decided to give up his weapons of mass destruction program and support of terrorism. Presumably Qaddafi realizes that overwhelming military forces are marshaling against him and that his best bet is not to provoke the American-led coalition.

But while the cease-fire, if real, is good news—it gives breathing room to the rebels in Benghazi, Libya’s second city, which Qaddafi had been on the verge of assaulting—it should not lead to complacency on the part of the West and our Arab allies. We cannot be content with the current stalemate, with Qaddafi holding Tripoli and most other cities while the rebels are ensconced in Benghazi and Tobruk in the east. We do not want to divide Libya indefinitely (unless its people vote to do so). Most of all, we do not want to get into a situation like that in Iraq between 1991 and 2003, when the United States had to devote considerable resources to maintaining a no-fly zone.

The longer Qaddafi stays in power, the more suffering he can inflict on the people under his control, and the more

mischief he can inflict on other countries—including the United States. He has already threatened to retaliate against “all air and maritime traffic in the Mediterranean Sea.” That is no idle threat, given that in the past he has been responsible for numerous acts of terrorism, including the midair bombing of Pan Am flight 103 in 1988.

The only way this crisis will end—the only way we and our allies can achieve our objectives in Libya—is to remove Qaddafi from power. Containment won’t suffice.

We must make “rollback” the international strategy.

Such a goal is not compelled, but is permitted, under U.N. Security Council resolution 1973. That resolution “stresses the need to intensify efforts to find a solution to the crisis which responds to the legitimate demands of the Libyan people” and which leads to “a peaceful and sustainable solution.” The Obama administration should argue that the only “peaceful and sustainable solution” would be for Qaddafi to abdicate power—as the president has already demanded (a demand he pointedly did not reiterate yesterday though he did say Qaddafi has lost “the legitimacy to lead”).

Now we need to muster the will and the resources to oust the dictator. Resolution 1973 gives authority for a wide variety of actions. The only step which is explicitly excluded is “a foreign occupation force of any form on any part of Libyan territory,” although it is not impossible to imagine a future U.N. resolution authorizing the dispatch of an international peacekeeping force to help Libya make the transition from Qaddafi’s heinous rule. The immediate need is for the U.S., British, and French armed forces—along with, we hope, Arab allies—to unleash a devastating fusillade from the air and the sea to cripple Qaddafi’s ability to threaten Libyan civilians. We should target not only his military forces but also their command and control infrastructure—including Qaddafi himself. The Libyan state is a one-man operation. Eliminate that man and the whole edifice may come tumbling down.

We should also dispatch special forces and CIA operatives to meet with the resistance and assess their needs.



There is an obvious need for outside specialists to help train the rebels and to coordinate any offensive they undertake with allied forces. We saw in Afghanistan in the fall of 2001 how devastating an indigenous force can be when backed by precision American airpower directed by tactical air controllers on the ground. A similar combination should work as well in Libya's deserts as it did in Afghanistan's mountains—especially considering the fact that Qaddafi has significantly fewer supporters than the Taliban had. Few if any Libyans have been converted to the loopy gospel of Qaddafi's "Green Book." The bulk of his forces are mercenaries. It is doubtful that they will fight to the death. Many will desert once they see they are backing a losing cause.

We don't want to discount the difficulties of toppling Qaddafi. Like any other military operation, it will be filled with risks, costs, and hardships. In many ways, however, the harder issue will be cobbling together a post-Qaddafi government. The Transitional Council, under the leadership of Qaddafi's former justice minister, Mustafa Abdul Jalil, has made a good start in Benghazi. Behind the scenes, we and our allies should be working to build the most durable and democratic regime possible—while assuring Qaddafi's allies, especially in the army, that they will be welcome in the new Libya. A good start would be to recognize the Transitional Council as Libya's lawful government, as France already has done.

The passage of U.N. Security Council resolution 1973 is a step in the right direction. But it is only the beginning—not the end. Much dangerous and difficult work remains to be done to create a decent post-Qaddafi state where (in the words of the U.N. resolution) civilians will not have to fear "attacks" and "abuses."

—Max Boot

No Substitute for Power

The crisis in Libya provides a useful reminder that the world's demand for American power is rising. This is clearly the case in the Muslim world, which was in turmoil long before the current "Arab spring." As Senator Richard Lugar recently fretted, "Libya might not be the last of these cases." Just so.

No one can predict with any precision when or where the "next case" might be. But it is folly to presume—and for our government to plan—that there won't be further conflicts, that revolutionary change will be, as the president has put it, "organic," that what happens overseas stays overseas.

The Obama administration came to power believing



that it could better manage the national security "portfolio" by divesting the United States of "underperforming" assets—that is, Bush's wars—in the greater Middle East. The Obama administration wanted to reinvest the proceeds at home, and advance a more limited foreign policy. Defense Secretary Robert Gates bluntly summarized the argument at West Point last month: "Any future defense secretary who advises the president to again send a big American land army into Asia or into the Middle East or Africa should have his head examined." No surprise that Gates has been leery of the intervention in Libya.

Yet Obama has now started, not just inherited, a Middle East war. Perhaps he can take the obvious and logical step and prepare for the likelihood of next cases. As Secretary Gates also said to the cadets, "When it comes to predicting the nature and location of our next military engagements, since Vietnam, our record is perfect: We have never once gotten it right."

To get it right, first recognize the primacy of military power in international politics. In the present crisis, the Obama administration, though slow off the mark, did in fact achieve about as much as diplomacy could be expected to achieve. Getting a useful U.N. resolution at all beat the odds. The administration has also created a credible international coalition. The proof of the effort, however, will be in the willingness and ability to use force to remove Muammar Qaddafi from power.

As these recent events attest, there is no substitute for having sufficient U.S. military forces to be able to conduct multiple campaigns in the region while continuing to operate throughout the world. It's not clear we have this capability now. After all, it appeared the Bush administration could only adequately fight one of its wars at a time.

AP PHOTO / KYODO

And what we do have, we are in the process of cutting. What this will leave us with is simply not enough. The House Armed Services Committee's March 18 "Views and Estimates" letter put it plainly to Rep. Paul Ryan: "This [House Budget] committee should not jeopardize the security of the nation by accepting across-the-board cuts to national defense without regard to the inherent strategic risks."

To quote from the bipartisan defense commission, headed by former National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley and former Defense Secretary William Perry: "As the last 20 years have shown, America does not have the option of abandoning a leadership role in support of its national interests. . . . Failure to anticipate and manage the conflicts that threaten those interests . . . will not make those conflicts go away. . . . It will simply lead to an increasingly unstable and unfriendly global climate and, eventually, to conflicts America cannot ignore."

In short, the world hasn't stopped, and we can't get off. To the contrary: Across the Middle East, the pace of events is accelerating. Our president now understands we have no choice but to become more deeply involved. It's the right and necessary thing to do. Which is why cutting defense is the last thing America should now be doing.

—Thomas Donnelly and Gary Schmitt

The Party of Freedom

And so, despite his doubts and dithering, President Obama is taking us to war in another Muslim country. Good for him.

The president didn't want this. He's been so unhappy about such a possibility—so fearful of such an eventuality—that first he tied himself in knots trying to do nothing. Then he decided that, if he had to act, it would be good to boast that he was merely following the Arab League and subordinating American action to the U.N. Security Council. After all, nothing—nothing!—could be worse than the perception that the United States was "invading" another Muslim country.

Rubbish. Our "invasions" have in fact been liberations. We have shed blood and expended treasure in Kuwait in 1991, in the Balkans later in the 1990s, and in Afghanistan and Iraq—in our own national interest, of course, but also to protect Muslim peoples and help them free themselves. Libya will be America's fifth war of Muslim liberation.

The modern Republican party has played a key role in these honorable struggles. When in power, Republicans have taken the lead in fighting for liberty. When in oppo-

sition, they have sought to push Democratic presidents to act—in the Balkans, and today in Libya—and have supported Democratic presidents when they acted on behalf of American interests and principles, as with the surge in Afghanistan.

On March 17, for example, a few hours before the Security Council voted on Libya, the House of Representatives considered a resolution offered by Rep. Dennis Kucinich, "Directing the President, pursuant to section 5(c) of the War Powers Resolution, to remove the United States Armed Forces from Afghanistan."

The Afghanistan war has had bipartisan support from the beginning. The Obama administration and the GOP leadership were both opposed to Kucinich's resolution—which called not merely for timetables or draw downs, but for the simple and absolute removal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan. Yet close to half the Democrats in the House of Representatives voted for retreat and defeat.

And the Republicans? 222 to 8 against withdrawal. And the 87 Republican freshmen, about whom there's been a fair amount of media hoopla heralding supposedly newly emerging isolationist tendencies? Not a single vote for Kucinich.

That's not to say there's no debate in the Republican party, and among conservatives, about American foreign and defense policy. There is and should be such a debate. And there are authentic strains in the Republican and conservative traditions to which the worriers and the withdrawers can appeal. Those strains are not, in our view, very helpful guides to dealing with the world of 2011—but those who disagree with us are free to make their case.

What we do hope, however, is that the worriers and the withdrawers really do *make* a case—rather than demagogically play off frustrations with a difficult war, or exploit a vague and ill-informed sense that the Pentagon is too big. A real debate on defense programs and on Afghanistan will be healthy for the party and for conservatives. It's a debate we're confident Reaganites will win.

And it's a debate that may remind Republicans and conservatives that the Reagan tradition—indeed, the Reagan-Bush-Dole-Bush-McCain tradition—in foreign policy isn't a burden to be borne. It's a tradition to be proud of. It's rare that a political party gets to stand for more than a partial interest, for more than a limited point of view. It's rare that a political party gets to stand for the national interest, for national greatness, for the exceptional American role in the liberation of peoples around the globe.

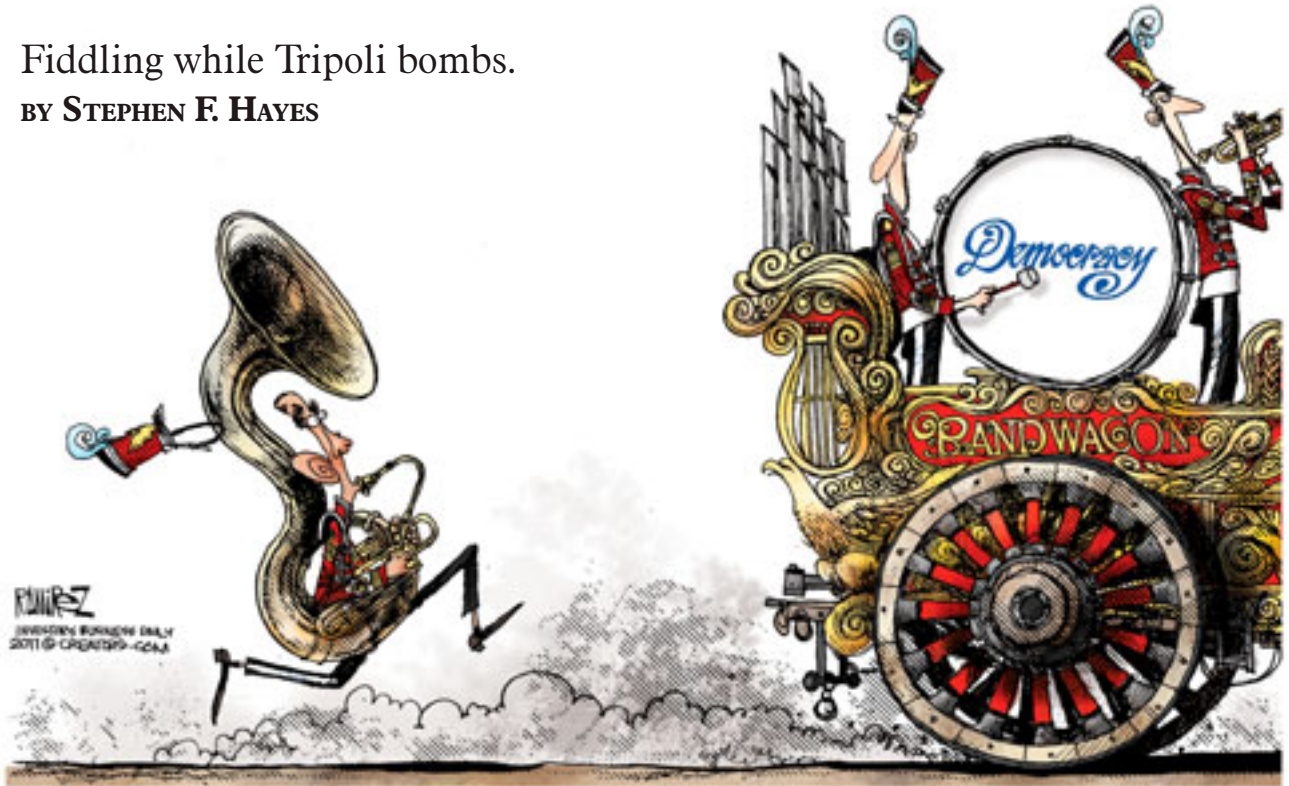
That is what the modern Republican party has stood for. Part of that modern Republican tradition includes, when in opposition, supporting a Democratic administration when it does the right thing. That's what Republicans have done with regard to Afghanistan. It's what Republicans will do as the nation prosecutes the effort in Libya. And as Republicans select a 2012 nominee, they should seek a leader who will stand unabashedly for freedom at home and abroad.

—William Kristol

The Slow-Motion President

Fiddling while Tripoli bombs.

BY STEPHEN F. HAYES



For three weeks, Obama administration officials publicly scoffed at the prospect of a no-fly zone over Libya and warned against military action in the Middle East. Then last week the administration backed a United Nations resolution that will likely result in both.

In the meantime, the seemingly endless consultations with the international community in search of some elusive “consensus” on Libya have made a successful outcome there much more difficult.

On February 18, after days of clashes between protesters and regime loyalists, Qaddafi’s security forces began to withdraw from Benghazi, the country’s second-largest city. The victory gave confidence and momentum to the Libyan opposition. Rebel forces swept westward across Libya’s northern coast, taking towns

and marching toward Tripoli. “We will keep protesting until the regime falls,” activist Badawi Altobawi told the *New York Times*. “There is no going back.”

But Qaddafi did not share the growing sense of inevitability about the end of his rule. He dispatched his son, Saif al Islam el-Qaddafi, to deliver a nationally televised warning of a civil war. “We will fight until the last minute, until the last bullet.” He was serious.

President Obama finally spoke publicly about Libya on February 23. He said that his team had presented him with a “full range of options,” but did not elaborate. The major announcement in his remarks seemed to be an upcoming trip to be taken by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who, the president noted, would be headed to Europe for consultations in five days.

But even as the administration insisted that all options remained

on the proverbial table, its top officials were dismissing some of them. In remarks the White House distributed to reporters, U.S. Ambassador to NATO Ivo Daalder said a no-fly zone would do no good.

“It’s important to understand that no-fly zones . . . really have a limited effect against the helicopters or the kind of ground operations that we’ve seen, which is why a no-fly zone, even if it were to be established, isn’t really going to impact what is happening there today,” he said. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Mike Mullen also made clear their skepticism about a no-fly zone.

There was a deep irony here. As the United States sought international consensus on Libya, several top officials were publicly arguing against the consensus emerging in favor of a no-fly zone among U.S. allies—including the French, the British, several Gulf states—and

Stephen F. Hayes is a senior writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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even members of the Arab League. All the while, on the ground in Libya, opposition leaders were seeking out journalists to beg for protection from Qaddafi's planes.

The Obama administration's consultations continued. Without explaining how, Obama said that Qaddafi had to go, having "lost legitimacy." Adopting the cowboy language he once found so distasteful, Obama proclaimed that the "noose" was "tightening" around Qaddafi's neck.

It wasn't. Within days the opposition's momentum had been arrested, then reversed. Qaddafi's forces pushed back west-to-east, killing rebels and retaking towns as the international community dithered.

In congressional testimony on March 11, Lieutenant General Ron Burgess, director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, noted the change in momentum. "The impetus, I think as you know, I mean I think the press had it about right in terms of initially the momentum was

with the other side. That has started to shift. Whether or not it has fully moved to Qaddafi's side at this time in-country, I think is—is not clear at this time. But we have now reached a state of equilibrium where the—the initiative, if you will, may actually be on the regime side."

It was. Each new day brought horrific stories of a regime willing to do anything to survive and a desperate opposition bewildered that the world was idly watching their bloody demise. When Obama was asked directly about Qaddafi's growing strength, he argued that "the rebel groups are just now getting organized" and promised to "continue to apply pressure" on the regime.

Finally, in New York last Thursday, the United Nations Security Council finally authorized the use of force in Libya, with 10 nations voting in favor, and 5 abstaining. The Obama administration, following the lead of Britain and France, joined with Bosnia and Herzegovina,

Colombia, Gabon, Lebanon, Nigeria, Portugal, and South Africa in voting yes. Russia, China, our NATO ally Germany, Brazil, and India abstained. Now, having furthered the perception that U.N. authorization is necessary for U.S. action, and after a month of consultations and warnings and sanctions and on-the-ground brutality, the Obama administration was, finally, ready to act.

Of course, the challenges the United States and its allies face today are greater than they would have been if we had acted to support the opposition early, building on its momentum, rather than now having to reverse the regime's gains. But at least the United States won't be seen as unilateralist.

How important was that goal? On Wednesday, the day before the U.N. resolution passed, a BBC reporter asked Hillary Clinton a pointed question. "If Benghazi falls to Colonel Qaddafi because the United States was seen to take its time deliberating, history won't judge the Obama administration very kindly, will it?"

Said Clinton: "First of all, I don't want to engage in hypotheticals. We don't know what will happen. And secondly, the United States under President Obama is engaged in numerous efforts around the world to ensure peace and stability." Then she got to her point. "And it is important that no one sees the United States acting unilaterally. This is what we were criticized for in the not-too-distant past."

In his remarks Friday on the U.N. Security Council resolution, President Obama insisted that the United States would be clear about its mission in Libya: to protect civilians from slaughter at the hands of their government. After repeatedly calling for Qaddafi to go over the past three weeks, however, Obama failed to repeat that demand and even seemed to propose a way for the Libyan dictator to stay. Clear the president was not.

But then he hadn't been for a full month. ♦

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This spring, onboard guests of *The Weekly Standard* will be joined not only by popular faces from the magazine but also by two special guests: American Enterprise Institute Senior Fellow and former Ambassador to the United Nations John Bolton and best-selling author (and contributing editor) P.J. O'Rourke. We sail May 12 from Barcelona with stops in Lisbon, Bruges, Cherbourg, London, & more.



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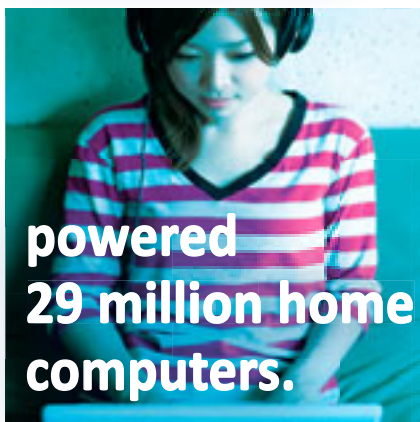
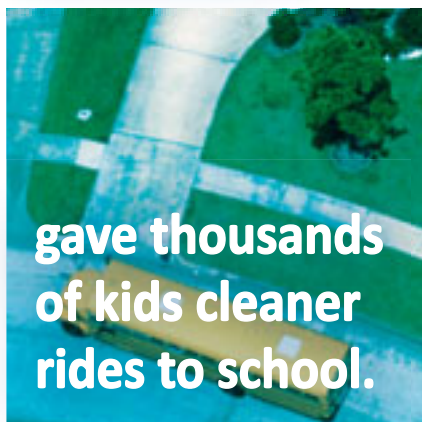
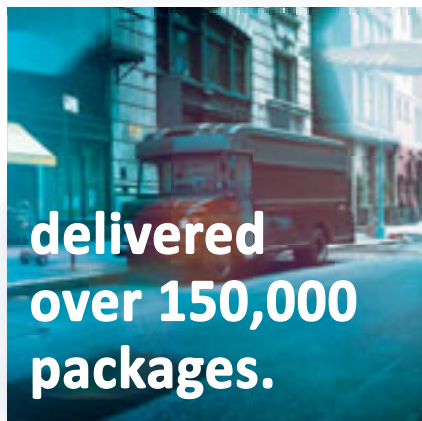
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All Quiet on the Lebanon Front

For the moment.

BY LEE SMITH

Beirut

With a civil war brewing in Bahrain and a hot war raging in Libya, Lebanon is at the periphery rather than the center of Middle East turmoil. That may change when indictments handed down by the Special Tribunal for Lebanon investigating the murder of former prime minister Rafik Hariri are unsealed in the coming weeks. The tribunal has reportedly filed amended indictments with more damning evidence that may name not only rank and file Hezbollah operatives, but senior officials from the party as well as Syrian security officers.

In the meantime, with the warm spring weather turning Beirut into an Eastern Mediterranean idyll, this is perhaps the most placid city in the Middle East. And it's not clear the Lebanese are comfortable with that fact, for even the unlikeliest characters seem to be itching for a fight.

"No to the weapons" is the pro-democracy March 14 movement's new rallying cry, meaning no to Hezbollah's arms and signaling a relatively aggressive campaign from a pro-democracy coalition that has seemingly been rocked back on its heels the last few years. So when former prime minister and now opposition leader Saad Hariri took off his jacket and tie, rolled up his shirt-sleeves, and joined the crowd during this year's March 14 commemorations, his adversaries understood it

as a challenge. His Sunni base and other supporters of the March 14 coalition approved the gesture, seeing his adoption of the casual, man-of-the-people style of American politics as a sign of Hariri's eagerness to get down to business.

It's true that Hariri fares much better in informal settings, where his relative youth (he's 39, which for Arab politics is barely out of puberty), humor, and vulnerability are in stark contrast to the formal Hariri, squirming in an expensive suit and looking like he cannot read his cue cards. He seems to be more confident in his current role as head of the opposition than he was as head of the government—a government, it should be remembered, that was blocked at every turn by Hezbollah until it brought the government down two months ago. And even then Hariri managed to ensure that Lebanon would cooperate with the U.N. tribunal so that it could get to the final stage of its work—indictments against the murderers of his father and 22 others on February 14, 2005, as well as a string of subsequent political assassinations carried out against journalists, politicians, and civil society activists.

With Hezbollah increasingly on the defensive, this year's March 14 festivities may have been the most successful, and the largest, since the initial 2005 demonstration that kicked off Lebanon's "Independence Intifada" and sent Syrian troops back home after a 15-year occupation. Nonetheless, for all of Hariri's newly minted charisma, the event was still marked by political incompetence. During the festivities, a large portrait of the Saudi monarch King Abdullah

was unfurled from the rafters of the Virgin Megastore, a gesture that left some observers astonished, certain it was a stunt engineered by one of Hariri's rivals in order to play up the fact that the Sunni leader criticizing Hezbollah for its relationship with Iran had his own foreign sponsor in Riyadh. Alas, it was no prank. The point was to show that the Saudis were standing with Hariri and March 14 rather than with Najib Mikati, the Sunni businessman and pol recently designated prime minister of the Hezbollah-led government. But the effect was to water down Hariri's message about a free and sovereign Lebanon, whose future should be determined by and for the Lebanese people.

Worse yet, says independent Shia political activist Lokman Slim, "this was the same Saudi family that tried to sell out Lebanon to Syria, and the same king who has forbidden political protests in his own country and sent 1,000 troops into Bahrain to put down the Shia. What legitimate place does he have in a Lebanese political protest?"

Slim is also concerned that March 14's "No to the weapons" rallying cry is likely to further alienate the Shia community. "Look, I'm not just against the weapons," says Slim, "I'm against the whole resistance to Israel. But the Shia are going to understand 'no to the weapons' as 'no to the Shia.' Hezbollah has done a very good job of brainwashing the community that the weapons are an integral part of their identity, their dignity."

For Slim, the question is, What happens to the Shia community once Hezbollah is gone? Will they be able to be integrated, finally, into the country's social fabric, or will they be made to pay for the indignities that the Islamic resistance forced on the rest of Lebanon? Worse than the costly war with Israel instigated by Hezbollah in 2006 was the party's coup against the democratically elected government, completed this January but initiated with the May 2008 siege, when Hezbollah slaughtered Sunnis in Beirut and attacked the Druze in the Chouf mountains. "Humiliation

Lee Smith is a senior editor at THE WEEKLY STANDARD. His book The Strong Horse: Power, Politics, and the Clash of Arab Civilizations (Anchor) has just been published in paperback.

is a real emotion,” says Slim, and one for which the Shia may well be held accountable one day.

Still, cautious optimism is the mood in much of Lebanon of late, optimism that Hezbollah may be losing its grip. Besides the special tribunal, which may expose an outfit till now respected in the Sunni-majority Middle East for its resistance to Israel as the murderer of a major Sunni figure, Hezbollah’s financing is also being targeted. The group receives anywhere from \$100 to \$200 million a year from its sponsors in Tehran (which is now profiting from soaring oil prices), but for some time it has also pursued independent sources of income.

After designating a number of Hezbollah financiers who fund the group through illicit trade (conflict diamonds, weapons, and drugs) in Africa and Latin America, the Treasury Department last month also designated the Lebanese Canadian Bank as a “primary money laundering concern” used by an international drug-trafficking network moving almost \$200 million a month, from which Hezbollah profited. With U.S. financial institutions severing their ties to the Lebanese Canadian Bank, some here say that this is only the tip of the iceberg and that Hezbollah’s funds are being drained. “It’s the Al Capone thing,” says Slim, meaning that the U.S. government is going after public enemy number one via its financial shenanigans.

From Slim’s perspective, Hezbollah should be seen in the same context as the dictatorial regimes across the region that either have already fallen or are now fighting for the privilege to rule, including Hezbollah’s Iranian sponsor and its patrons in Syria, where protests are picking up steam. According to Slim, this process of regional renovation all began in 2003 with the fall of Iraq’s Saddam Hussein. “When that statue came down,” he says, “it made possible what was previously unimaginable. I saw the origins of Hezbollah, so I can imagine its end as well.” ♦

A Fossil Fuel Renaissance?

The policy fallout from Japan’s nuclear woes.

BY STEVEN F. HAYWARD



Anti-nuclear protesters in Manila

The catastrophe at Japan’s Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant is being regarded as the atomic power equivalent of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, which set back offshore oil drilling just as it appeared on the brink of a substantial expansion. This means we’ve now come full circle, as critics of offshore drilling compared the Gulf oil spill to Chernobyl. At the very least the events in Japan are going to reinforce the reluctance of Wall Street to invest in new nuclear power in the United States, deter insurance companies from covering nuclear plants, and increase resistance

on Capitol Hill to extending the loan guarantees the nuclear industry says are essential to kick-starting more nuclear installations.

The big winner in the short and intermediate term will be fossil fuels—especially coal and natural gas—which will be used to fill the breach in Japan and elsewhere to generate electricity. Which means that the biggest loser is ironically the environmental community, which had been slowly abandoning its longtime opposition to nuclear power because it offered an important component in reducing greenhouse emissions linked to climate change. Although many environmentalists are enjoying an “I-told-you-so” moment, the new cloud over nuclear power means that global carbon dioxide emissions will go up faster. Germany, for example, is

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shutting down several of its nuclear reactors for several months as a precaution, even though they are not vulnerable to tsunamis. One early estimate is that German carbon dioxide emissions will rise by as much as 4 percent this year because of the nuke shutdown. Japanese CO₂ emissions will surely rise by more than this as the country replaces its lost nuclear capacity with coal, gas, and even oil in a few old oil-fired power plants it will be forced to bring online. The Kyoto Protocol emissions targets for 2012, already doubtful, can be tossed on a nuclear waste pile.

But unlikely as it may seem at the moment, the final irony is that if we keep our heads, the aftermath of this disaster may give us a clear view of how a new generation of nuclear power might be possible. As of press time it is still difficult to know exactly what is happening at the reactors, as contradictory and tentative information pours forth on an hourly basis. It will be weeks or months before we have an accurate understanding of what has occurred. The Department of Energy, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the private-sector Nuclear Energy Institute were reluctant to comment all week because of the fast-moving situation.

Two aspects seem certain as of now. First, the reactors themselves appear to have survived intact an earthquake 40 times the size they were designed to withstand. It was the failure of the backup diesel generators necessary to keep the cooling systems operating, swamped by the 33-foot tsunami, that touched off the crisis and subsequent explosions. But for this arguable lack of foresight, the reactors might have come through unscathed. Plainly the first task for operators of ocean-side reactors, such as California's San Onofre and Diablo Canyon plants, is to ensure their backup power systems are not similarly vulnerable, even though the tsunami risk to these plants is much lower than the Japanese plants. Second, the necessary decision to flood the reactors with corrosive seawater means the reactors will be a total loss, costing

Japan billions in cleanup costs and lost power capacity. A third aspect is likely to become evident over time: The radiation risks—even in the worst-case scenario of a total breach of the containment structures—will turn out to be more modest than the media hype would have you believe.

This is not to make light of a very serious situation at the reactors or the health risks to the courageous workers on the site who may be exposed to dangerous levels of radiation when new explosions and breaches occur. But the media coverage of the whole episode is a textbook example of the inability to gauge risks, weigh trade-offs, and put a story in its proper perspective. Instead the media have done what they do best: generate panic.

The prize for the most egregious treatment belongs to Germany's *Die Welt* newspaper, which said that Japan's nuclear catastrophe will have the same political and psychological consequences as 9/11. Japan lost probably more than 10,000 people to the immediate quake and tsunami, and thousands more face much more acute risks than radiation in the coming weeks from cold weather, shortages of water, and failing sanitation systems. But these risks make for boring news copy. Instead we are treated to breathless media reports, recycled from the glory days of Three Mile Island, the nuclear accident that caused zero health impacts on local residents, according to follow-up studies, and Chernobyl, whose health effects turned out to be less than one-tenth as large as the initial estimates. At the time of Chernobyl in 1986, most accounts suggested the accident would lead to at least 50,000 deaths (since the Soviets, unlike the Japanese, failed to evacuate the nearby population in a timely way); subsequent studies have placed the number closer to 4,000. By contrast, the Environmental Protection Agency estimates that 21,000 Americans contract lung cancer every year from radon exposure in their homes, and another 50,000 Americans succumb to premature deaths from air pollution from fossil fuel energy. Both are probably

overestimates, but even if they overestimate the toll from radon and air pollution by a factor of ten, it is clear that nuclear power poses lower health risks than other energy sources.

There is no question that this is nuclear energy's worst moment. Will we have the maturity to learn from this catastrophe and move forward, as we did after Apollo 1 and the two space shuttle disasters and the early failures of commercial jet aircraft design like the British Comet of the 1950s? Over the last decade opinion polls have shown steadily rising public support for nuclear power in the United States following two decades of strong public opposition. The aftermath of the Japanese nuclear crisis will reveal how robust this shift is.

An additional irony of Japan's disaster is that had we not abandoned nuclear power 30 years ago, we might have begun deploying new-generation nuclear designs, such as small modular thorium reactors or light pressurized water reactors that either can't melt down or have passive redundancy features that do not depend on human action to shut down in the event of earthquakes or other disasters. Instead, we have extended the use of the large old light-water reactors, like the Fukushima Daiichi, long after their intended life span.

In 1980, science writer Ron Bailey points out, the U.S. government thought we might have as many as 1,000 nuclear reactors up and running in the United States by now, instead of the 104 aging plants we do have. Our nuclearphobia led us to build hundreds of coal- and gas-fired power plants instead.

Unlike the administration reaction to the Gulf oil spill last year, President Obama and Secretary of Energy Steven Chu have reiterated their support for nuclear power even in the face of the unfolding disaster in Japan, an encouraging sign. Obama and Chu could go one step better, though, and give a major address when the Japan crisis is over, calmly laying out all the facts and making the case to carry on. ♦

Reagan Versus Obama on Jobs

It's no surprise which president comes out ahead.

BY FRED BARNES

Let me bore you with some numbers. Employment dipped to 137,960,000 in December 2009. That may seem like a lot of Americans with jobs, but it happened to be the low point in the recession that began before President Obama took office the prior January.

Now jump to last month. Employment had risen to 139,573,000, an increase of 1,613,000 people in the workforce in 14 months. That's pretty impressive, right? Quite the contrary. By the standard of earlier economic recoveries, that rate of pickup in jobs is very poor.

President Obama and his advisers know this. It's why they aren't quite sure how bullish to be when talking about the economy these days. "The stock market has come roaring back," Obama said in his State of the Union address in January. "Corporate profits are up. The economy is growing again." Jobs? "That's the project the American people want us to work on," he said.

Obama's reelection may depend on the success of this "project." For most voters, jobs are a proxy for the economy. What the president faces now is a jobless recovery, and a fairly weak recovery at that. If this persists, his chances of winning a second term are bound to worsen.

President Reagan was confronted with a similar economic situation in the early 1980s. While it wasn't exactly

the same, it was at least close enough to what Obama faced to make a comparison worth looking at. As you might suspect, Reagan's recovery comes in well ahead of Obama's.

True, Obama's recession (December 2007 to June 2009) lasted 19 months, two months longer than Reagan's (July 1981 to November 1982). But Reagan's had been preceded by a seven-month recession (January 1980 to July 1980).



California unemployment line

And you can make the case, as some economists have, that what actually occurred was a three-year recession. Then and now, there was fear the economy might plunge into another Great Depression.

Let's look at the job numbers. The pit of Reagan's recession came in December 1982, when 99,032,000 people had jobs. Fourteen months later, employment had risen to 103,824,000, or job growth of 4,792,000. That really is impressive. It beats Obama's record over a similar period—starting from the nadir of jobs—by 3,179,000 jobs.

There's another yardstick for comparing Reagan and Obama: what's called the "labor force participation

rate." It's the percentage of Americans 16 years old or older who have jobs. Under Reagan, the low point was 63.5 percent in September 1981, down from 63.9 percent when he took office. Under Obama, it was 64.2 percent last month, down from 65.7 percent in January 2009.

This means just what you think it does. Percentage-wise, more people left the workforce under Obama than Reagan. Yes, both the population and the economy are larger today than in Reagan's time. So it's the percentages that are significant.

Here's another angle on the workforce. When Obama became president, there were 80,554,000 people considered by the Labor Department to be "not in labor force." Of these, 74,864,000 were "not in labor force" and didn't "want a job now."

This number matters because it affects the unemployment rate. Those neither working nor seeking employment are not considered unemployed for the purposes of calculating the rate. So the more of these there are, the lower the jobless rate is likely to be.

In his State of the Union speech, Obama said "more than one million private sector jobs" were created in 2010. However, he didn't mention that, according to Labor

Department statistics, 1,161,000 people departed the world of work and weren't looking for a job.

The dropout number would appear to cancel the gain in employment hailed by the president. Nonetheless, the jobless rate fell from 9.7 percent to 9.4 percent in 2010. In Reagan's second year, the rate grew from 8.6 percent to 10.8 percent before declining to 8.3 percent in 1983 and 7.3 percent in 1984.

One more item. Obama has often said his \$814 billion economic stimulus package, passed in February 2009, kept the economy from slipping into a depression. "One year later, it was largely thanks to the recovery act that

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THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

a second depression is no longer a possibility," he said.

This is a dubious claim. The recession was officially declared over in June 2009, four months after the stimulus was signed into law. The economy was growing again (just barely) and very little of the stimulus money had been spent by then. Employment had decreased by 1,709,000 jobs between February and June.

Despite its lame performance on jobs, the Obama administration has its cheerleaders, Austan Goolsbee, the president's chief economic adviser, being one of them. "If you had said in March of 2009, when we had just lost almost 800,000 jobs a month, GDP is in the steepest decline in more than a half-century, that by March of 2011 we're going to have grown for six straight quarters . . . added jobs for 12 straight months, spreads are going back to be lower than they were before the financial crisis, I would have given you a kiss," he said in a recent speech.

But imagine if Obama had pursued a different policy to boost the economy. His stimulus relied on spending and small tax cuts doled out gradually to individuals, thus unlikely to spur private investment and job creation.

In August 2009, Harvard economists Alberto Alesina and Silvia Ardagna released their study of the experience of 21 countries—most in Europe but also Canada, Japan, and the United States—from 1970 to 2007. "Fiscal stimuli based upon tax cuts are more likely to increase growth than those based upon spending increases," they found.

Military spending might help, Alesina told me, since it could be put to use without bureaucratic delays. Besides that, tax cuts are better. Jobless recoveries aren't new, he says, but the Obama recovery is "more jobless than most recoveries." And spending cuts are "not likely" to shrink GDP or jobs, as Democrats claim, Alesina says.

Reagan somehow knew all this decades before the Alesina-Ardagna study. He cut taxes and spending, and as the dry numbers show, employment grew rapidly—unlike now. ♦

The Quotas Everyone Ignores

Why universities are quietly favoring white males once again. **BY ANDREW FERGUSON**

Anyone who clings to a belief in the inevitability of human progress might want to contemplate the latest trend in college admissions. After a half-century of battles over racial and gender preferences for URMs (admissions-speak for "underrepresented minorities," a term that has traditionally comprised nearly anyone who isn't a white male), colleges and universities have boldly embarked on a policy of affirmative action preferences for . . . white males. It's like old times.

Few admissions deans like to talk about their latest innovation in recruitment, understandably enough. Less understandably, the United States Commission on Civil Rights decided earlier this month it didn't want to talk about it either. And even harder to figure, women's rights organizations are staying mum too.

By a vote of four to three, the commission shelved a proposal by one of its Independent members, Gail Heriot, to analyze and publish data that might answer this question: "Are private and public liberal arts schools with somewhat selective admissions discriminating against women—and if so, how heavy a thumb is put on the scale against them?" With a Republican majority, commission members had initially voted to study the question in 2009, and since then staffers have been trying to gather admissions data from 19 schools in the Washington, D.C., area—Georgetown University, Johns

Hopkins University, the University of Richmond, and others.

For the past year, however, the commission has been in the hands of a Democratic majority, aided by a Republican appointee, the sociologist Abigail Thernstrom, who now votes with the Democrats. When the staff presented its admittedly provisional and incomplete figures to the commissioners, they shut down the project altogether and voted not to allow the admissions numbers to be made public.

The investigation was shuttered, said one of the Democratic commissioners, because the data were "inadequate or perhaps faulty." Releasing the numbers, the commissioner said, might result in the public arriving at "misleading conclusions."

For her part, Heriot, a law professor at the University of San Diego and a longtime critic of preferences in admissions, said the move was a "travesty."

"This wasn't about the data," she said in an interview later. "There were problems with the data but they weren't insurmountable. . . . This was about politics."

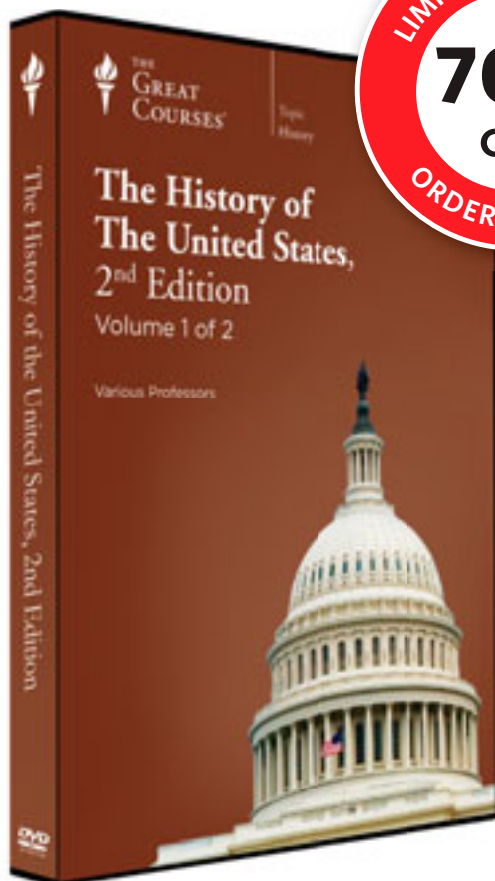
But the politics are very odd. Heriot, a congressional appointee to the commission whose views lean right, might be thought by the usual ideological taxonomy to be reluctant to press an investigation into wholesale discrimination against girls. On the other hand, the project should have been meat-and-³taters to the Democrats—a chance to expose a concerted effort by large, wealthy, unaccountable institutions to deny an education to qualified women purely on the basis of their sex.

Among college admissions

Andrew Ferguson is a senior editor at THE WEEKLY STANDARD and the author of Crazy U: One Dad's Crash Course in Getting His Kid Into College.



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professionals, it has been a barely concealed secret for several years that such an effort is underway at many, if not most, selective schools. The secret became public in 2006 when the admissions dean at Kenyon College, Jennifer Delahunty Britz, published an op-ed in the *New York Times*. Never underestimate the anger of a parent whose kid didn't get into the right school. Britz's daughter had just been wait-listed at a college that mom assumed she would glide into, and mom, being in the business herself, said she knew why.

"The fat acceptance envelope is simply more elusive for today's accomplished young women," Britz wrote. She offered an anecdote from her own experience, about a recent applicant to Kenyon. The girl was admirable in every respect but for her middling SAT scores. Britz finally decided to admit her, but it was a close thing. The kid should have been born a boy.

"Had she been a male applicant," Britz wrote, "there would have been little, if any, hesitation to admit." The threshold for boys is lower than for girls, not only at Kenyon but at other schools too. Boys, she explained simply, are "more valued applicants."

Britz's op-ed loosed a flurry of journalism—editors never tire of college admissions stories—much of it summarized the following year in an excellent exposé by *U.S. News and World Report's* Alex Kingsbury. A raft of prominent schools, including Pomona, Tufts, the College of William and Mary, and Boston College, were accepting boys at a far higher rate than female applicants—boys with lower test scores and lower grade point averages than their female rivals. William and Mary, for instance, accepted 40 percent of the boys who applied in 2006 and only 26 percent of the girls.

Since the early 1980s, when a brief period of parity was reached after generations of male dominance, more girls than boys have applied to

college each year; in 2011, 60 percent of college applicants will be women. Girls—sorry, fellas—are by any objective measure more attractive applicants than boys, with higher average GPAs and test scores. They have fewer behavioral problems. They write better application essays. They have a wider range of extracurricular interests. They clean up better for interviews.

On any fairly balanced scale, the acceptance rate for women at selective colleges should be far higher than for men. Instead it's the other way around.



Before the deluge: college women, 1970s

The reason is "affirmative action," sometimes called preferences, sometimes called quotas—though never publicly. Admissions deans like Britz have placed a thumb on the scale.

This much is generally accepted practice among college admissions deans in the upper tiers of American higher education. But why? If girls are better suited to college, why not let them enter the better colleges at rates equal to their achievements?

Here is where the Legend of 60-40 enters in. Sixty-forty is the ratio of women to men at which, according to admissions lore, the "atmosphere" of a campus changes irreversibly and the school's reputation passes a point of no return. It becomes known as a "girls' school" and before you know it . . . there goes the neighborhood.

"Once you become decidedly female," Britz wrote in her op-ed,

"fewer males and, as it turns out, fewer females find your campus attractive." Or worse, it becomes attractive to the wrong kind of male. Hubba hubba, in other words. Predation can be a problem. An article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* by the indispensable education writer Richard Whitmire offered anecdotes from the campus of James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia. JMU refuses to institute gender quotas and as a result is now more than 60 percent female. "What can be seen [on campus] so far is not encouraging," Whitmire wrote. "Stark gender imbalances appear to act as an accelerant on the hook-up culture"—a reference to the Bonobo-like mating patterns that have lately enlivened social life among America's budding scholars.

For this reason, the admissions dean of the College of William and Mary has been unapologetic about that thumb of his, which he has firmly planted on the boy side of the scale. "We are, after all, the College of William and Mary," he has often said, "not the College of Mary and Mary."

The most selective of the private schools from which the Civil Rights Commission staff requested data, Johns Hopkins and Georgetown, adamantly refused to cooperate with the commission, and the Department of Justice never got around to enforcing the commission's subpoenas. Title IX of the education amendments to the Civil Rights Act, which outlaws sex discrimination in public colleges and universities, exempts private undergraduate nonprofessional schools—a loophole designed in 1972 to preserve traditionally single-sex colleges, nearly all of which have since become co-ed.

It's fair to assume that the refusal of Georgetown and Hopkins was on grounds of self-incrimination. Boy quotas are the unofficial but undeniable means by which schools are staving off the dread 60-40, and even where sex discrimination is not explicitly

You deserve a factual look at . . .

The Truth about the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) Movement

Does it stand for Middle East peace or does it seek Israel's destruction?

Leaders of the effort to boycott, divest from and apply sanctions against Israel—the so-called BDS movement—say they stand for an “end to the occupation of the Palestinian territories,” “justice in Palestine” and “freedom for the Palestinian people.” But what are the real motives of BDS leaders—do they really want peace between Israel and the Palestinian people?

What are the facts?

While the BDS movement uses highly emotive language in their appeals for support—such as “ending repression” and “Israeli war crimes”—a closer look at the real motives of the movement reveals a more sinister goal.

First, note that the BDS movement focuses only on alleged war crimes and repression by Israel—and ignores real war crimes and tyrannical repression by other Middle Eastern nations and terrorist organizations. When Hamas and Hizbollah target thousands of rockets at Israeli civilian populations in violation of international law, BDS utters not a word of criticism, let alone a call for boycotts or sanctions. When Iran's government violently crushes peaceful protests and Egypt stifles its press and political opposition with a dictatorial hand, BDS is likewise silent. Why?

By singling out Israel for criticism and economic pressure, BDS employs a double standard—a hypocritical and dishonest tactic frequently used by anti-Israel and anti-Semitic hate groups.

The reason, as we'll see, is that the BDS movement is not really interested in alleged war crimes or repression. Rather its purpose is to delegitimize and then destroy Israel.

The second critical fact about the BDS movement is that while it masquerades behind words like “freedom” and “occupation,” one need only listen closely to its rhetoric to realize that these are code words for the elimination of Israel.

BDS leaders oppose a two-state solution—why? While the United States, Western European powers, Israel and the U.N. Security Council have embraced a “two-state solution” as the basis for peace in the Middle East, BDS leaders, such as Ali Abunimah and Omar Barghouti, are clear: They openly and outspokenly oppose a two-state solution. Why?

Because when BDS supporters talk about “the occupation of Palestine,” they refer not to disputed West Bank territories, but to *all* the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea—including all of Israel. When they talk about “freedom,” they don't mean freedom from security roadblocks, they mean freedom from Jews in their midst. When they talk about “occupation,” they mean *not* just Israeli

security forces in the West Bank, they also mean Israelis “occupying” the state of Israel.

The third telling fact about the BDS movement is that it consistently and vehemently opposes any efforts to bring Israelis and Palestinians together to work in peace and on peace. For example, BDS leaders advocate boycotting cultural exchanges between Israelis and Palestinian artists. They condemn educational cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian universities. Most revealingly, they *oppose peace talks* between Israel and the Palestinian leadership, calling them “collaborationist.”

BDS is not about “occupation.”

In short, BDS is not about peaceful coexistence or ending the “occupation” of the West Bank.

Indeed, Omar Barghouti, a graduate student at Tel Aviv University and BDS founder, admits, “If the occupation ends . . . would that end support for BDS? No it wouldn't—no.”

Not only do BDS leaders admit this, but they implacably support the “return” of nearly five million *descendants* of Arab refugees who left during Israel's war of independence in 1947. In fact, most of these Palestinians are not truly refugees—fully 95 percent of them have never set foot in Israel.

Most importantly, the immigration of millions of Arab refugees' descendants to Israel would make Jews a minority in their own state. As President Obama has correctly noted, “The ‘right of return’ would extinguish Israel as a Jewish state, and that's not an option.” Yet destroying Israel by flooding it with millions of Palestinians is precisely what BDS leader Barghouti insists upon: “This (the right of return) is something we cannot compromise on.”

BDS's goal: “Extinguish Israel as a Jewish state.” BDS unequivocally rejects Israel's many peace offers—including numerous land-for-peace proposals supported by the United States—and rejects Israel's willingness to sit down to direct peace talks without preconditions.

Thus, the facts make BDS's intentions clear: Rather than being a movement that seeks peace and freedom, it is a movement motivated by an obsessive hate of Zionism and Jews and opposition to the Jewish state—one bent on fomenting strife, conflict and enmity until Israel is utterly defeated.

Rather than a movement that seeks peace and freedom, BDS is motivated by an obsessive hate of Zionism.

If you support peace between Israel and the Palestinians, if you support two states for two peoples—living side by side in cultural, social and economic harmony—please oppose the ill-intentioned BDS movement in your community. Speak out against hateful, one-sided campaigns to boycott Israeli goods, to divest from companies that do business with Israel and to enact sanctions against the state of Israel. This is not the path to peace!

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illegal, a few beams of sunlight cast into the cloisters of college admissions offices might act as a disinfectant, as liberal activists like to put it.

Yet the activists have been utterly silent, for reasons we can only guess. There's been not a peep even from the National Women's Law Center, which routinely issues press releases with such headlines as "NWLC Files Brief in Supreme Court, Supporting the Women of Wal-Mart in their Class Action Lawsuit" and "House Republican Spending Cuts Devastating to Women, Families and the Economy." Reached by *U.S. News*, a spokesman for the American Association of University Women ducked. "We need to help impoverished boys and girls to improve educational outcomes and have equal opportunity," she said, with stubborn irrelevance.

Whitmire, the education writer, has offered theories of his own to account for the thunderous silence, based on his discussions with feminist lawyers. "Alerting the public that women increasingly dominate college campuses will make it appear women have 'won,'" he wrote. "And if women have won, why are they still complaining about discrimination in higher education?" Public sentiments like this might endanger more important feminist projects like increasing the number of tenured female faculty and closing campus "wage gaps." There again, the Democrats on the commission may have simply been responding to the interests of a precious political ally—the vast, impenetrable combine of American higher ed, which is no happier than any other industry to have the feds snooping into its files.

For her part, Heriot is stumped.

"I don't get it, I really don't," she said. She vows to try once more to bring the matter of girl quotas before the commission. "It bothers me that no one is willing to shine a light on this," she said. "And it bothers me if no one's bothered that women might be denied admissions on the basis of sex. I'd at least like the commission to produce real facts, real evidence, so we can know for sure." ♦

Prosecuting the Federal Debt

Alabama's Jeff Sessions leads the charge on spending. **BY MICHAEL WARREN**

Jeff Sessions has earned a reputation as a tough interrogator. The Alabama senator led the spirited opposition to Supreme Court nominees Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan when he was ranking member of the Judiciary Committee. Before entering Congress, he was a prosecutor, a U.S. attorney, and a state attorney general.

And in his latest role as the top Republican on the Budget Committee, Sessions has been pressing the congressional GOP's public relations battle on spending, the deficit, and the national debt more aggressively—and more visibly—than just about anyone.

"I feel like the loyal opposition, Republicans with integrity, need to endeavor every day to tell the truth about our financial circumstances," Sessions told me in his Washington office. "That's what I see my job as right now."

At first glance, Sessions seems an unlikely candidate to lead the charge. He's short and unassuming, speaking slowly and deliberately, with a nasal Alabama twang. There's nothing imposing or foreboding about his person. And he probably isn't the first senator that comes to mind at the words "YouTube sensation."

But on Capitol Hill, that's exactly

what Sessions has become. His "BudgetGOP" YouTube account is updated several times a week with videos of floor speeches, media appearances, and congressional hearings that focus on the same message: The debt is unsustainable, and the president needs to lead.

The news media are starting to take notice. In one hearing on the Obama budget request, Jack Lew, the director of the Office of Management and Budget, focused on the administration's dubious claim that the president's proposal would stop adding to the debt. By the end of Sessions's cross-examination, Lew was pleading vaguely about "respecting" each other's positions.

"I can't respect a position that suggests this budget reduces the debt," Sessions shot back. "If you take that position, we're talking beyond each other." The C-SPAN cameras were rolling, and that video has logged over 32,000 views on YouTube. Undoubtedly more have seen the exchange since ABC News clipped the video for a story, which prompted the left-leaning *Politifact* to call the administration's claim that its budget would reduce the debt "false."

"We don't have the votes in the Senate to do the things I think ought to be necessary," Sessions says. "But at the same time, we have the ability to influence the national debate."

Sessions is sounding the same



Senator Jeff Sessions

Michael Warren, a Collegiate Network fellow, is an editorial assistant at

THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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alarm about unsustainability as his House counterpart, budget committee chairman Paul Ryan of Wisconsin, but the two have different styles. Ryan is the wonk with the facts, figures, and actuarial tables in his mental filing cabinet. Sessions is the Southern lawyer with a talent for attention-getting theater.

"I'm excited that he's in this role," says Ryan. "He is bringing a prosecutorial zeal to the budget."

Other cabinet officials have received the same treatment as Lew, including Secretary of the Treasury Tim Geithner, from whom Sessions got an admission that the debt was "unsustainable" under the budget proposal, and Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood, who, when asked how the president planned on funding his transportation budget request, meekly suggested the administration and Congress "sit down together and figure this out."

"Well, 'sitting' and 'figuring out' is a little late when you've got a budget that assumes it's going to be done when it's not going to be done," Sessions responded.

Of all the federal government's fiscal problems, it's the national debt—the money the federal government has borrowed to finance ever-increasing discretionary spending and exploding entitlement programs—that most concerns Sessions. In floor speeches and TV appearances, he often notes the sharp increase in government borrowing as spending has skyrocketed under Obama, a figure that would continue its steep rise under the president's proposed 2012 budget.

"We're not doomed to economic slowdown," Sessions says, "but there is no doubt, from the best experts we've heard from, that we could have another debt crisis rather soon if we don't change what we're doing."

The most shocking number Sessions presents is the interest on the debt. He is constantly pointing out that under the president's budget plan, ten years from now the interest on the debt will be \$844 billion, nearly double the combined spending of 15 federal agencies that year.

Sessions isn't optimistic that President Obama wants to do anything about controlling the debt. "I believe he is like a child with his hand in the cookie jar," Sessions says. "He is not serious about constraining spending."

Despite his background in law and justice, Sessions may be even more attuned to budgetary problems. He was elected Alabama attorney general in 1994, riding a wave of discontent over reckless spending in the state government.

"The incumbent I beat [Democrat Jimmy Evans] had mismanaged the office terribly," Sessions says. "It helped me win because he was behind on his electric bill. He couldn't pay his electric bill!"

Faced with a \$5 million shortfall on a \$15 million budget, Sessions cut a third of the attorney general's staff and consolidated offices outside of Montgomery. The gap was nearly closed within three months. Sessions

says they did the job of the attorney general better and more efficiently than his predecessor. And personnel, he says, still isn't back up to the level it was when he came into office 15 years ago.

Sessions says the experience taught him "that the protestations you hear from the federal bureaucracy, that reductions are going to result in the government sinking into the ocean, [are] often exaggerated."

Even in the face of such institutional obstacles, Sessions is confident he'll win the present PR fight. He believes the American people have already started paying attention to the problem of our debt and Washington's unwillingness to address it by decreasing spending.

"I think we can win because the truth wins if you sustain the advocacy," Sessions says. "Their position is not tenable under the facts. We want a budget that's based on facts." ♦

Pensions Aren't the Problem

How not to balance state budgets.

BY ELI LEHRER

In March 2010, the notoriously divided Illinois legislature passed a major reform in the state's pension plan that created a two-tier system offering decidedly less generous benefits to new hires. In response, Republicans and Democrats alike patted themselves on the back. "This bill is not window dressing," declared senate minority leader Christine Radogno (R) in an interview with the *Chicago Sun-Times*. House speaker Michael Madigan (D), long the state's major power-broker, agreed.

Eli Lehrer is vice president of the Heartland Institute.

For all the self-congratulation, the victory proved hollow. Even after the reforms, most analysts predict that Illinois's pension system will go broke before 2020. In January, the legislature approved a 66 percent hike in the state's income tax. While it slightly narrowed a yawning budget gap, the state's overall budget problems remain, and the retirement system itself is hardly on stable ground.

Illinois's story offers a lesson to other states looking to rein in employee compensation. Quite simply, pension benefits represent a reasonably small share of overall state spending (3.4 percent in Illinois), not all states have severe

long-term funding problems, and state pensions are almost impossible to reform in ways that solve current budget problems. Moreover, there's a commonsense case that reasonably generous public sector pensions are good public policy. Pensions, in short, aren't the main cause of state budget problems, and many political leaders trying to bring public sector compensation down ought to focus their attention elsewhere.

Let's start with the facts: In all, 84 percent of state and local government employees are eligible for defined benefit pensions, and all the states allow at least some workers to retire before 65. (Only 10 percent of private sector workers, heavily concentrated in a few sectors, still get defined benefit pensions.) Although the long-term nature of pension liabilities makes the numbers sound scary—the Pew Research Center has popularized the idea of a “trillion dollar” pension liability gap, and some sources come up with even higher numbers—their actual costs are a drop in the state spending bucket. A lot of revenues also roll in over the long term. Pension contributions, according to the National Association of State Retirement Administrators, represent 2.9 percent of state expenditures, almost exactly what they were 15 years ago.

Meaningful short-term reductions in pension-related spending require overcoming almost insurmountable obstacles. Once workers pass a “vesting date” and become eligible for pensions (most frequently after 5 years on the job and rarely more than 10), states usually cannot change promised pension benefits without a constitutional amendment. According to data compiled by the National Conference on Public Employee Retirement Systems, 10 states, including 4 of the 5 largest, specifically protect public employee pensions in their constitutions, and in another 19, courts have ruled that other broadly worded constitutional provisions provide near-total protection for vested employee pensions. Thirteen other states provide more

limited constitutional protections. In all, only 6 states—Maryland the largest among them—*don't* provide clear constitutional protections for pension benefits, and, in some of them, case-law suggests that major reforms lowering existing pensions might be subject to a constitutional challenge. (One other state, Nebraska, specifically lets the legislature change pension terms.)

All this means that pension reforms made today will not have major budgetary effects until state workforces have turned over entirely, 40 years from now. These constitutional protections have already had consequences. In New Jersey, legislators straight-out refused to consider Governor Chris Christie's pension plan on the grounds that it violated the state constitution. Efforts at further pension reform in Illinois and Pennsylvania have also faced constitutional questions.

For most states—even some with deep fiscal problems—pensions aren't the leading factor. A study by the Wisconsin Legislative Council shows that only 8 of the nation's 87 major state-level pension systems have gaps between promised benefits and liabilities greater than 30 percent. (Good stock market performance since the data were compiled means things would likely look a little better now.)

In the end, many states facing very large current budget gaps—New York, Florida, Texas, and Wisconsin among them—have pension systems that are likely capable of paying their obligations indefinitely with only minimal tweaks. Even in California, where absurdly generous public employee pensions have attracted enormous media attention, both of the major pension funds have shortages of around 10 percent that the state could cover pretty easily with some combination of economic growth, tax hikes, and service cuts, if its other fiscal problems were not so severe.

Given that pension systems are not all that expensive, very difficult to change, and in better shape than

some assume, there's a strong practical case for directing budget cutting attention elsewhere. State and local governments also have a strong comparative advantage relative to private industry in offering pension benefits: State governments never go out of business and can count on rising gross revenues so long as their populations grow. (All states but Michigan grew between 2000 and 2010.) As a last resort, they can usually assure themselves more revenue with a tax increase.

In principle, therefore, state governments are much better positioned to offer pensions than the typical private corporation and can offer them more cost effectively. Since many of the most common government jobs—firefighter, police officer, corrections officer, regulatory overseer—have no direct private sector analog, the lifetime-with-one employer career path scorned by many in the private sector makes a lot of sense for government employees. The real savings for government are likelier to be found in cutting salaries and other benefits. There would still be political obstacles, of course, but not constitutional ones, and the savings would be immediate and potentially much larger.

This doesn't mean that states like California that allow office workers to retire at full salary at age 50, encourage “double dipping” (letting employees collect more than one state pension, as happens in Florida) or calculate pensions in ways that guarantee employees retirement incomes higher than their working salaries should continue doing so. If nothing else, letting public employees live high on the hog as taxpayer incomes stagnate is deeply unfair.

But pensions, all-in-all, have been more a target of opportunity than anything else. States and localities intent on budget-cutting would do well to crack down on “Cadillac” employee health care plans (which cost, on average, more than twice as much as pensions), much-longer-than-private-sector vacations, and high wages paid to mediocre civil-service workers who cannot be fired. ♦

The Sobell Confession

Four men with Leica cameras, 1,885 pages of classified documents: the other secrets passed to Stalin by the Rosenberg ring.

BY RONALD RADOSH
& STEVEN T. USDIN

Three years ago, Morton Sobell gave an interview to Sam Roberts of the *New York Times* that surprised readers and stunned many who continued to believe that Sobell and his more famous codefendants, Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, were innocent victims of political persecution who had never spied for the Soviet Union.

Roberts's piece was published on September 12, 2008. It reported that Sobell had "dramatically reversed himself" and "admitted for the first time that he had been a Soviet spy." Sobell had also implicated Julius Rosenberg. Roberts asked "whether, as an electrical engineer, [Rosenberg] turned over military secrets to the Soviets during World War II when they were considered allies of the United States," and "was he, in fact, a spy?" Sobell answered: "Yeah, yeah, yeah, call it that. I never thought of it as that in those terms."

But Roberts reported no specifics about the Rosenberg ring's espionage activities, stating that Sobell had downplayed the significance of anything Rosenberg may have given to the Soviet Union. "What I did was simply defensive," he told the *Times*. "There's a big difference between giving that and stuff that could be used to attack our country." As for anything Ethel's brother, David Greenglass, had given to the Soviets through Julius's

network, Sobell claimed, "What he gave them was junk."

In effect, Sobell confessed to an ethical misdemeanor: passing along data of no consequence to an ally. This fits the current narrative of the Rosenbergs' two sons, Michael and Robert Meeropol. They, too, recently conceded that their father was a Soviet agent, but argued his activities were honorable because he only was helping an ally. Despite strong evidence to the contrary, the Meeropols contend that their father was not responsible for any atomic espionage.

Julius Rosenberg was convicted on the basis of evidence that his ring had stolen atomic secrets, but the jury heard nothing to indicate what kind of information Sobell had given to the Soviets. He was convicted on largely circum-

stantial evidence. The most compelling testimony came from Max Elitcher, who told of driving to Sobell's home on Long Island in 1948, shaking an FBI tail on the way, and then accompanying his friend on a late night drive to Manhattan. Elitcher testified that the two friends, former roommates, drove to East River Drive in New York City and parked on a deserted waterfront street named Catherine Slip. Sobell



Morton Sobell (left) and the Rosenbergs, 1951

took a 35 mm film canister out of the glove compartment. Elitcher told the jury he waited in the car while Sobell delivered the film to Rosenberg, a few blocks away.

The jury also must have been impressed by the fact that Sobell, who had never traveled outside the United States, bolted to Mexico with his family soon after Julius's arrest and immediately started inquiring about booking passage on a Soviet bloc freighter. The jurors saw through Sobell's claim that he'd suddenly taken his family on a Mexican vacation.

Although the evidence clearly indicated that Sobell had been a member of the Rosenberg ring, neither the jury nor the public ever learned whether he'd been an important spy or a minor player. Above all, there was no information in the

Ronald Radosh, coauthor of The Rosenberg File, is an adjunct fellow at the Hudson Institute and a blogger for Pajamas Media. Steven T. Usdin is the author of Engineering Communism: How Two Americans Spied for Stalin and Founded the Soviet Silicon Valley and "The Rosenberg Archive," a historical timeline at www.wilsoncenter.org/cwihp/rosenberg.

public domain indicating whether what he gave the KGB had put American lives at risk. When he finally admitted his guilt to Roberts, Sobell was adamant that he'd never harmed American national security.

Only in December 2010, in an interview with Steven Usdin, did Sobell reveal that he had indeed been a key participant in an espionage operation that provided an enormous amount of classified data to the KGB, information that was extremely useful to the Soviet military.

At 93, Morton Sobell is frail, and his mind comes and goes, but when Usdin asked if he could recall any specific incidents from his career as a Soviet spy, Sobell grinned from ear to ear and told a story from six decades ago as if it had occurred a month before. "Sure, I remember that time we got all the manuals and secrets from Langley Field from a safe at Columbia." It was 1948 or 1949, he said, and the safe belonged to Theodore von Karman, at the time the world's most prominent aerospace engineer, a man who shaped much of America's postwar military strategy and who was trusted with some of the Pentagon's most closely guarded secrets. Langley Field, near Hampton, Virginia, was one of the nation's preeminent centers for military aviation design.

FBI files reveal that the material was removed from von Karman's safe between June 26 and July 9, 1948, most likely over the July 4 holiday weekend. The job was done by a NACA (predecessor of NASA) scientist named William Perl, who had traveled from the government agency's offices in Cleveland to Columbia University, where von Karman worked. Perl, himself a brilliant aeronautical engineer, had been a trusted aide and friend of von Karman's. Perl had the combination of his mentor's personal safe, which contained classified material connected with von Karman's role as chairman of the U.S. Air Force Scientific Advisory Board.

In 1951, a government informant, Jerome Eugene Tarkow, who shared Julius Rosenberg's cell at Rikers Island while he was awaiting trial, told the FBI that Julius had bragged about the data Perl had taken from von Karman's safe. Tarkow told the bureau that copying the documents had kept four men using Leica cameras busy for 17 hours, working against the clock so Perl could return the documents before they were missed.

The FBI learned that during his visit to von Karman's office, Perl had signed a receipt for a huge amount of classified material—35 test reports, a total of 1,885 pages—on such aerodynamics problems as a "comparison of hovering performance of helicopters powered by jet-propulsion and reciprocating engines, high speed wind tunnel tests . . . of the D-558 research airplane; and preliminary tests of the NACA 66-006 airfoil."

The files that Perl borrowed were of major value to the

Soviet Union. In addition to the tests and diagrams of a plane, they included virtually everything that von Karman was working on for the U.S. government. Some of the data pertained to the Lexington report, a detailed study of the feasibility of nuclear-powered aircraft.

Sitting in his apartment under a framed poster of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, Sobell told Usdin how he, Rosenberg, Perl, and a fourth man he refused to identify had worked night and day over a weekend at an apartment used by the network. They had used Leica cameras to copy all von Karman's files. On Monday morning, Sobell recalled, he and Rosenberg packed canisters of undeveloped 35 mm film in a box that was so big one man could barely carry it, took a train to Long Island, "and gave it to the Russians on the platform." Sobell's recollection dovetails perfectly with Rosenberg's boast to Tarkow.

As far as the KGB was concerned, the delivery couldn't have come at a better time. Stalin had ordered a massive crash program to improve Soviet military aviation, and Cold War tensions had long since put an end to all technological collaboration between the Red Army and the West.

Sobell didn't miss a beat when asked about his motives: "I did it for the Soviet Union." He explained that his support for the USSR was not the result of deep reading of Marx or Lenin, nor was it sparked by the economic meltdown he and his peers experienced during the Depression. Sobell was a Red Diaper Baby. His parents were both Communists; his mother led party meetings in the family's apartment when Morton was a toddler. When Morton was a college student, his father, a pharmacist, was happy to supply condoms for his Communist friends. One of Morton's uncles ran a Communist summer camp in the Catskills, and another worked as a secret courier, carrying messages between party officials in New York and their superiors in Moscow. It never occurred to Sobell to be anything other than a devoted Communist. In the '30s and '40s, that meant dedicating oneself to Stalin and the Soviet Union.

Sobell's story about the Columbia safe caper succinctly encapsulates some of the most significant conclusions historians have drawn from the flood of documentation about the Rosenberg case released over the last 20 years. The evidence indicates that Rosenberg and his comrades were motivated by loyalty to the Soviet Union, not opposition to fascism as their defenders claim, and that the Rosenberg ring provided vast quantities of technical data to the Soviet Union that helped it achieve near parity with the United States in the skies over Korea and Vietnam.

Ironically, the Rosenbergs' defenders have long argued that it was a slander on the memory of the late William Perl to imply that because he removed from a safe material he was authorized to see he had committed espionage. Indeed,

the claim advanced by Ronald Radosh and Joyce Milton in their 1983 book *The Rosenberg File* that Perl had removed the contents in order to photograph them for the Soviet Union was met with derision. Michael Meeropol, for example, referred to the incident sarcastically as “one of [Tartakow’s] most dramatic tales.”

Writing in the second edition of *We Are Your Sons*, a book he coauthored with his brother Robert, Michael Meeropol described his reaction to Tartakow’s account of what Julius had told him. The Perl story at first made him “concerned” since it was “the closest that they come in the entire book to a real live incident of espionage.” But Meeropol goes on to explain that the late Walter Schneir told him that “there was no system for checking out anything at that lab.” Meeropol also emphasized that no one had seen or known of Perl’s removing any documents from the building.

The absence of a witness led Meeropol to claim that Perl had removed nothing from von Karman’s safe and that the entire incident had been fabricated by the bureau in order to build a case against Perl for the purpose of pressing him to confess to being part of Rosenberg’s ring.

Now, with Sobell’s new confession, it is clear that Perl did remove documents from the safe and give them to Sobell and others to photograph, documents that

proved to be of immense help to the Soviet Union early in the Cold War.

Sobell still refuses to identify the fourth photographer. The material was copied at 65 Morton Street in Greenwich Village in an apartment leased to Alfred Sarant. During the war, Sarant lived there with Joel Barr, both active members of the Rosenberg ring. When Rosenberg was arrested, Sarant and Barr fled, first to Czechoslovakia and later to the Soviet Union.

After the war, and before the FBI closed in on Rosenberg and company, Sarant sublet the apartment to several friends. During this period a man named Max Finestone moved in. FBI files refer to him as Rosenberg’s last recruit, an assertion supported by recent leaks from the KGB archives. Finestone stonewalled the FBI, refusing to discuss his relationship with Rosenberg or admit to any connection with espionage. When Sol Stern and Ronald Radosh interviewed Finestone in 1978, he firmly denied knowing anything about espionage and complained about the direction of the questions he was asked.

But in February 2011, interviewed on the phone by Steve Usdin, Finestone admitted, “I was aware that *something* was happening.” More specifically, he told Usdin, “At the time, I knew they were providing information to

Attention States: Public Policy Matters

By Thomas J. Donohue
President and CEO
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Being part of the solution—not the problem—requires you to assess the facts, understand underlying trends, and offer innovative, commonsense proposals. That’s why the U.S. Chamber has been doing a deep dive on how local, state, and federal regulations are impeding job creation and economic growth. Our top three priorities are jobs, jobs, and jobs—and a dramatically growing regulatory burden is holding us back.

Last week we examined how regulatory red tape and extreme local opposition were delaying hundreds of energy projects that could put millions of people back to work, boost the economy, and meet the nation’s growing need for energy—and what could be done about it. This week we focus on a new study that examines how labor and employment regulation is impacting states’ ability to create jobs and promote business startups.

The goal of our study, conducted by Seyfarth Shaw LLP and Navigant Economics, is to provide state policymakers with an objective view of how policies in their states stack up with those of others, and perhaps, more importantly, how reforms can accelerate economic growth. (See where your state ranks at www.workforcefreedom.com.)

The bottom line is not surprising: Reducing the burden of labor and employment regulation in the states could act as a free shot of economic stimulus. States with the largest burden of labor and employment regulation are sacrificing opportunities to reduce their unemployment rate and generate new business startups. If all states were to improve their regulatory climates, the effect would be equivalent to a one-time boost of 746,462 net new jobs nationwide. Moreover, the rate of new business formation would increase by 12%, resulting in 51,590 new firms nationally each year.

And by improving regulations, we don’t mean simply eliminating regulations. In this case, it is not necessarily about more or less regulation, but about smart regulation. It’s about making the right choices about what to regulate and how to regulate it. It’s about promoting policies that ensure worker rights and safety while allowing states to remain competitive and growth oriented.

The message to states is simple: Public policies matter when it comes to jobs, growth, and attracting new businesses and retaining existing ones. Smart governors and legislators are taking every available step to boost their economies, reduce regulatory burdens, and strengthen the private sector, which creates almost all new jobs. Smart business organizations are providing them with the facts and ideas to help them on their way!



U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Comment at
www.chamberpost.com.

the Soviets.” Even so, Finestone hedged, stating that he’d been only dimly aware of what his roommates were doing and had no idea of what kind of information they were giving the KGB.

This doesn’t seem credible. Finestone knew that Sarant, Barr, Rosenberg, and their friends were engineers working on military technologies. Did he think they were giving the Russians copies of Chinese takeout menus?

Finestone must have at least guessed what was going on, and it is likely he was an active accomplice. The late James Weinstein, a well-known socialist publisher and editor in the 1970s and ’80s, had been Finestone’s roommate at Cornell University. After graduation, when both men were living in New York, Finestone suddenly told Weinstein he had to move out of his apartment quickly, and the two became roommates again. Weinstein remembered going to see Finestone at the Morton Street apartment and finding a table set up with photographic lights and Leica cameras. When he asked what it was for, Finestone told him it was for photographing “sheet music.”

Another point must be made about the photography party Sobell remembers so fondly. The incident occurred long after anyone could argue that the Soviet Union was under threat from the Nazis or that the USSR was an American ally. In his memoir, *On Doing Time*, Sobell wrote that after World War II he was convinced that war between the United States and the Soviet Union was inevitable, and that it would be the fault of the United States. Sobell’s actions make it clear that in the event of this conflict, he would stand with the Soviet Union.

Asked in December when he stopped spying, Sobell replied: “I didn’t.” He explained that he’d continued to funnel secrets to the KGB up until shortly before he fled to Mexico in June 1950. That escapade ended when the Mexican police tracked Sobell down, whacked him on the head with a pistol butt, drove him to the Texas border, and turned him over to the FBI.

Sobell was tried along with the Rosenbergs. Following their execution, idealistic men and women around the world organized passionate protests and campaigns in a futile effort to get their codefendant liberated from Alcatraz. Having served 18 years in federal prisons, Sobell was finally released in 1969, still asserting his innocence.

For decades, Sobell’s response to mounting evidence against him and Julius Rosenberg was to hurl invective at anyone who questioned their loyalty. Max Elitcher’s sworn testimony that Sobell and Rosenberg had openly discussed their espionage activities was perjury, Sobell said. Decrypted KGB cables implicating Sobell and his comrades he insisted had been forged and/or grossly misinterpreted. A sentimental former KGB officer’s efforts to rehabilitate Sobell and

the Rosenbergs as Soviet patriots were, Sobell maintained, slanderous senile ravings.

The vehemence of Sobell’s denials over so many years made his confession in 2008 all the more remarkable. Still, the *Times* story was less of a bombshell than it might have been because it provided a forum for Sobell to justify and minimize his spying. It reiterated lies that have long comforted the Rosenbergs’ supporters and muddled the historical record.

In fact, there is no evidence that Sobell or other members of the Rosenberg ring ever withheld any information they thought could be useful to Stalin and the USSR. In the five years between the end of the war and the unraveling of the Rosenberg spy ring, Sobell had access to a wealth of classified military material, including detailed information about the characteristics and capabilities of every American bomber, designs for analogue and digital computers used to automate anti-aircraft weapons, and specifications for land-based and airborne radars that were later deployed in Korea.

When the Cold War turned hot in Korea, this technology was used to kill American soldiers. High Air Force and NACA officials told the *New York World-Telegram* on July 9, 1953, that data stolen by Perl were probably used in the design of the Russian high-tailed MiG fighter jet that was deployed in Korea against American airmen. One unnamed source, described as a “top Air Force expert on aerodynamics,” told these officials that “the unusual tail of the MiG was specifically a NACA development, as was another anti-turbulence design feature which showed up on the MiG a surprisingly short time after the Air Force, with NACA help, had perfected it.” The *World-Telegram* quoted NACA director Hugh Dryden as saying that “Perl was in a position to supply information which could fill out a bigger picture of a whole field of information.”

Sobell’s recent second confession finally clears up some of the few remaining points of contention about the Rosenberg case—what exactly Sobell contributed, whether he and his comrades gave the Soviets valuable information, and whether it is appropriate to dismiss their actions as youthful indiscretions in aid of a wartime ally. By confirming that he was one of the group who photographed material filched by Perl, Sobell demolished the lie that the Rosenberg ring stole only inconsequential data and engaged in mere “industrial espionage.” He also revealed that, while there is no evidence he engaged in atomic espionage—with which he is associated in the public mind because of his coconspirators—he was guilty of giving the Soviet Union secret data that advanced the capabilities of the Soviet military machine. He has thus put the last nail in the coffin of the arguments of the Rosenbergs’ apologists, who continue to insist that the couple were framed and executed by the U.S. government for their political ideas. ♦

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'The Death of General Warren at the Battle of Bunker Hill' by John Trumbull (1786)

Fight for Freedom

The American Revolution for beginners. **BY EDWARD ACHORN**

The staggering ignorance of American history displayed by students at prestigious institutions of higher learning, in recent surveys, is reason to fear for our country. You can't very well understand or appreciate the value of the freedom we enjoy, and the price of obtaining it, without a thorough grounding in the American Revolution. But there are painless ways to start, and one is this volume which, in

Edward Achorn, deputy editorial page editor of the Providence Journal, is the author of Fifty-nine in '84: Old Hoss Radbourn, Barehanded Baseball and the Greatest Season a Pitcher Ever Had.

The American Revolution
A Concise History
by Robert Allison
Oxford, 128 pp., \$18.95

a remarkably concise hundred pages or so, rushes us through the long, bloody slog, including the long train of abuses that forced the Americans into a fight for independence, and the efforts to found a lasting republic when the fighting was through.

Robert Allison, professor of history at Suffolk University in Boston, fills his few pages with essential quotes, lively vignettes, and apt observations. He brings onto these pages the

people too often left out of this history—women, Native Americans, slaves—without sacrificing the roles of the leading American and British men in the struggle. Altogether, this is balanced, straightforward, and refreshingly bracing popular history. He notes, for example, how lonely and isolated our 13 colonies were at the start of the conflict: There was “no formal communication system joining them except through London. Post roads linked Boston with Philadelphia, but most transit was by water, and few Americans had visited the other colonies.” George Washington had once sailed to Barbados, but John Adams did not set his eyes on

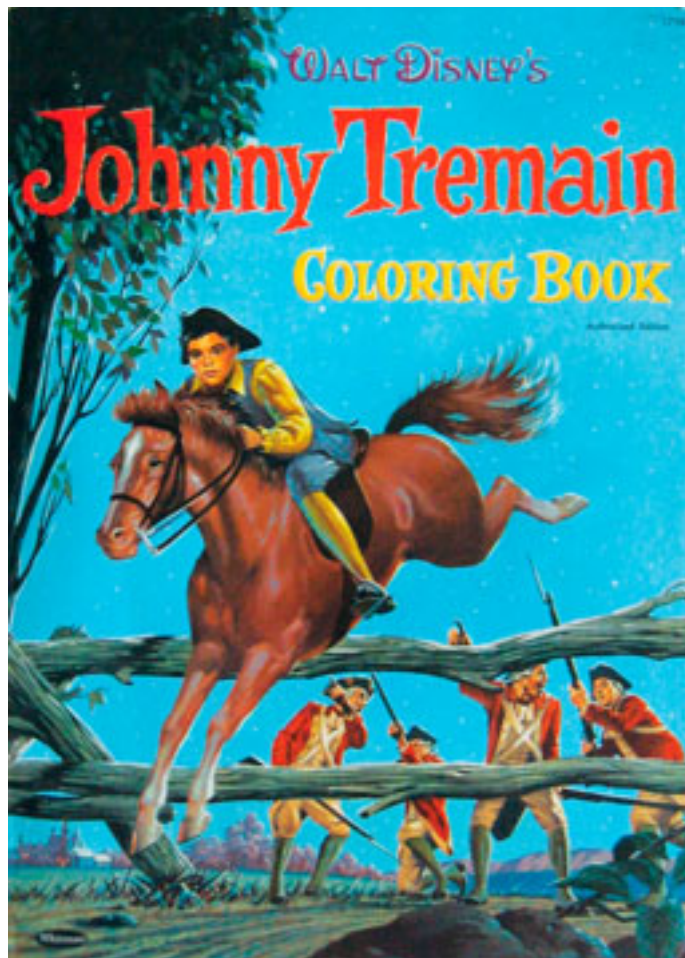
FRANCIS G. MAYER / CORBIS

Philadelphia or New York until he was nearly 40.

One of the great achievements of the colonists was, thus, sharing information and getting news and opinion into print about British attempts to erode their liberty and impose taxes on them without representation. By 1766, Sons of Liberty groups throughout the colonies were actively fighting the tax on documents, known as the Stamp Act, to the point that customs agent John Robinson reported that tax officials felt the fury “not of a trifling Mob, but of a whole Country.” In London, Benjamin Franklin warned that British attempts to force the Americans into compliance would be disastrous: “They will not find a rebellion; they may indeed make one,” he observed shrewdly. When the British actually did send troops to Boston, Franklin warned that the act was as foolish as “setting up a smith’s forge in a magazine of gunpowder.”

For a time, British oppression seemed to work. “If it were not for an Adams or two, we should do well enough,” declared Thomas Hutchinson, the royal governor of Massachusetts. But those pesky Adamses, Samuel and John, refused to leave their ostensible masters alone, rallying Americans to defend their liberty, as the British ratcheted up the pressure. The Adamses well understood how to move public opinion by keeping on message while resisting the temptation to imitate the worst abuses of their adversaries. “Put your enemy in the wrong, and keep him so, is a wise maxim in politics as well as in war,” Samuel Adams advised. And soon after the first shots rang out, another

powerful voice entered the fray, through a pamphlet entitled *Common Sense*. Thomas Paine recognized from the start this was about more than a mere political battle: “We have it in our power to begin the world over again,” he wrote. And that is what the Revolution did, by unleashing the explosive force of ordered liberty.



The Disney version, 1957

The American Revolution follows the long, brutal war, which sorely tested America’s faith in itself and in its greater leader, General Washington. Along with strategy and battles, Allison offers us such memorable vignettes as the fundraising drive by the women of Philadelphia, who raised the staggering sum of \$300,000 to assist the troops. As part of their contribution, the women wished to give each soldier two dollars—a move the pragmatic Washington blocked,

fearing that his men would spend it on drink. The women chose, instead, to present each soldier with a shirt. Once they were no longer fighting for their country’s survival, the men would have greater freedom to make their own choices.

It’s hard to explain the meaning of the Revolution without discussing its aftermath, and Allison offers a brief recounting of the Constitution’s crafting and ratification, and Washington’s first acts as the first president. Of course, a book such as this bears a certain resemblance to the “Classics Illustrated” comics I devoured as a kid: You get the general idea of great literature, but not the flavor. At the same time, if it encourages further reading, this volume is doing its job. In these pages, Allison rockets us forward all the way to July 4, 1826, and the deaths of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson—50 years to the day after the country’s birth through the publication of the Declaration of Independence. Jefferson had hoped that the Fourth of July would serve as a signal to the world, “arousing men to burst the chains under which monkish ignorance and superstition had persuaded them to bind themselves, and to assume the blessings and security of self-government.”

Of course, many people are still determined to bind themselves, through ignorance and superstition, to forms of government by which elites make decisions that belong to every human being. Transplanted to the Middle East, at the moment, the American Revolution is an ongoing fight, as a new generation seeks to assume the blessings and security of self-government. ♦

Objection Sustained

The trouble with lawyers begins in the law schools.

BY GEORGE LEEF

Following Judge Roger Vinson's decision that Obamacare exceeded the powers granted to Congress and was therefore void, the White House released a statement denouncing the ruling as "odd and unconventional." But why should it be considered odd and unconventional for a federal judge to read the language of the Constitution, consider its history, and then rule that a law cannot be enforced because Congress had no authority to enact it? Isn't that standard procedure?

After reading *Schools for Misrule* you will understand perfectly. At most law schools—and emphatically at elite ones such as Obama's Harvard—students are immersed in a bath of statist theories that rationalize ever-expanding government control over nearly every aspect of life. They hear that social progress depends on politicians and judges dictating what people must do (such as purchasing federally approved health insurance) and must not do (such as using incandescent light bulbs). They learn that the concepts of limited government and federalism are outmoded antiques that merely defend unjust privilege. So to many law school graduates, Judge Vinson's opinion is odd and unconventional: It runs contrary to everything they were taught about the Constitution and how judges should interpret it.

Walter Olson's previous books show the malign effects of the legal profession on everyday Americans. *Schools*

for *Misrule* explains how most of the damaging ideas that lawyers, politicians, and judges are eager to fasten upon society originate in our law schools. Decades ago, lawyers who went to law school (and many did not—more on that later) received a no-nonsense education in the bedrock knowledge for their careers: courses in property, contracts, torts, and civil

procedure along with practice in legal research and writing. Now, the legal curriculum relegates some of that bedrock to optional status—Olson notes, for example, that Yale has proudly brushed property into the elective pile—and is loaded with ideologically slanted courses such as Climate Change Justice, Social Disparities in Health, and Social Justice Lawyering.

For students who majored in tedious pseudo-disciplines in college, such courses are irresistible. Moreover, Olson shows, law schools go to considerable lengths to recruit students who are inclined toward careers in "public interest law." Backed with funding from George Soros's Open Society Institute, the American Association of Law Schools launched its Equal Justice Project in 2000. Its objective was to encourage activism among law students. Toward that end, many schools now have tuition-forgiveness programs that subsidize students who "follow their conscience" into public interest lawyering, or set aside seats in each class for students who pledge to go into such careers. Activist students can team up with activist professors to foment change by working in the numerous clinics and programs law schools have established. Name almost any leftist

cause today—feminism, environmentalism, homelessness, poverty, and so forth—and law schools have centers where faculty and students are busy as bees concocting lawsuits.

Consider, for example, the prodigious costs that have been forced on New York City by law school-bred homeless activists. In the early 1980s the city embarked on an ill-conceived program of constructing public housing to eliminate homelessness. New York soon found its program spinning out of control as public interest lawyers prevailed upon a friendly judge to declare a "right to shelter" and rule that New York was not doing enough to give effect to that "right." Even though state law required that the homeless be placed in dwellings within 48 hours, the judge declared that the city must pay a penalty unless it placed them within 24 hours. And although city regulations allowed officials to evict people for misconduct, the judge declared them void.

Where do you suppose judges get the notion that they can act as dictators, overriding written law as they please in pursuit of their egalitarian visions? Law school, naturally! In law school, students routinely hear that great jurists are those who don't let statutes or precedents keep them from doing whatever seems right. Bad judges are those who merely follow the law when they could be creating new rights and righting old wrongs. Most of our litigation-induced convulsions have their roots in law school. The reparations-for-slavery movement was catalyzed by a Yale law professor's book. University speech codes were a reaction to a book entitled *Words That Wound* by then-Stanford professor Mari Matsuda. Lawsuits claiming that huge tracts of land must be returned to Indian tribes were born out of a 1971 article in the *Maine Law Review* and brought to costly fruition by various Native American law centers.

The most recent explosion of legal activism involves making the United States subject to international law. Olson notes that at a New York University Law School symposium, speakers declared that international law

Schools for Misrule
Legal Academia and an Overlawyered America
by Walter Olson
Encounter, 296 pp., \$25.95

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requires nations to guarantee all people the right to health, education, “decent” work, and freedom from “severe social exclusion.” Columbia has created a campaign called “Bring Human Rights Home,” which is intended to generate pressure to make American policies consonant with the collectivist notions of “the international community.” Several law schools have been named as official “monitors” of America’s many “human rights abuses,” such as disciplining minority students at a higher rate than white students and failing to fund abortions with public money. Impossible? All you need is a persistent litigation team (and it’s easy to be persistent when you’re spending other people’s money) and the right judge. Keep in mind that several Supreme Court justices think it appropriate to look at international law in deciding cases involving the U.S. Constitution.

My only quibble with *Schools for Misrule* is that it doesn’t fully explain why law schools have the extremely prominent position that they do. For most of our history (as Olson correctly states) law schools were not the obligatory pathway into the legal profession. Until the 1920s, most lawyers learned what they needed to know as apprentices working in firms. But then the American Bar Association stepped in and lobbied for laws making a degree from an ABA-accredited law school a prerequisite for taking state bar examinations. While that move was rationalized as “raising standards” and “protection for consumers,” the ABA’s motive was exactly the same as for all special-interest barriers to entry: limiting competition.

Except for the fact that prospective lawyers have no alternative to the needlessly long, expensive law school regime, many students would do their basic training, take the bar exam, and get on with their careers. If that could happen, there would be less money for wild-eyed courses and the profs who teach them. Law schools wouldn’t be such a menace to our liberty and property if they didn’t have a captive market. We should reduce their detrimental impact by letting competition break up the cartel. ♦



Treasure Hunt

One family, and one institution, humble before history.

BY CHARLOTTE HAYS

Richmond, Virginia

The other day, with time to kill here in Virginia’s capital city, I stopped by the Museum of the Confederacy, home to a collection of paintings and artifacts that show how ordinary people, especially soldiers, lived in those trying times. A fellow Southerner had recommended visiting the museum, but blanched on being thanked for the suggestion in front of our Yankee friends. This year is the 150th anniversary of the beginning of the late hostilities, and I for one have been dreading it: The disheartening comparison of the Confederacy to Nazi Germany is bound to get a good workout. A “secession ball” in Charleston, South Carolina, has already been ridiculed by newspapers and condemned by the NAACP.

I submit that this harsh attitude is fairly recent, and stems not from genuine moral superiority over these ragtag rebels and benighted slaveholders but from our love of moral preening. A sign proclaims, “Torture is wrong”—to which the only proper response is, You don’t say. “War is not the answer” is another popular slogan; apparently, the question doesn’t matter. These catchwords reveal a desire to lecture others more than anything else.

The singular virtue of the Museum of the Confederacy is that it doesn’t lecture. It is humble before history. The tattered flags, uniforms (my, these men were small!), and Varina Davis’s butterfly quilt with silk flags and shields—sewn by the first lady of the Confederacy long after the war ended—are allowed to

speak for themselves. The White House of the Confederacy, a few steps away from the museum, confirmed me in my elegiac mood. One of Jefferson and Varina Davis’s rowdy children died in the nursery. Here, amid the rococo furniture popular at the time, the First Family held “poverty balls” to raise money for the soldiers. There was no food and the only libation was “Jeff Davis Punch” (better known as water) and no ice, of course. It was in the small office, adjacent to the bedroom, that a spy carefully observed Davis’s communications.

I was fortunate to visit the museum because for years it has been on the brink of closing. Opened in 1896 and always supported entirely by private donations, the Museum of the Confederacy has not only faced financial woes, but Virginia Commonwealth University’s expanding Medical Center threatened to surround it more effectively than any band of Union soldiers. But the museum appears safe for the time being.

“We’ve spent years saying the rumors that we’re closing aren’t true,” spokesman Sam Craighead told me. Indeed the museum will open three additional branches, the first at Appomattox, to display artifacts in storage. Craighead said that \$6.5 million has been raised for the Appomattox installation. Meanwhile, the current location in Richmond is not without its advantages: Two Civil War-era dolls were taken next door to VCU’s hospital for x-rays which determined that, far from being empty-headed belles, they had used their noggin to smuggle morphine from the North to ease the sufferings of wounded Confederate soldiers.

As it happens, my afternoon’s browsing at the museum inspired me to look again for something I had long wanted to find: a reminiscence of the last days of

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The White House of the Confederacy, 1865

the Confederate Treasury, left behind by one Robert Gilliam. I'd seen a number of oblique references to the manuscript, apparently typewritten, and even tried to buy it from an Amazon listing. The product description was so vague I could not tell whether the Robert in question was my great-great-grandfather or an uncle with the same number of greats. I did have a little photo album, composed of *cartes de visite*—small calling card-sized, albumen prints—that belonged to my great-great-grandmother. (These pictures were all the rage, as might be expected in a time when you might never see a husband or fiancé again.) Under a picture of the house in Richmond, somebody has written "Castle Dangerous," the title of Sir Walter Scott's last novel.

A lot of us blame Sir Walter for start-

ing the damned war in the first place: He instilled notions of chivalry in the hotheaded Scotch-Irish.

Would the Museum of the Confederacy possibly know how to find a copy of the elusive reminiscences? Thanks to Teresa Roane, the fine and courteous librarian at the museum, I am writing with the manuscript on my desk. Copying and postage cost me three dollars (the Internet offering, for \$200, is thankfully no longer available!), and reading it has revealed to me a famous incident in Civil War history of which I was ignorant. It is an episode that left behind a legend of buried treasure and which started, at least for Robert Gilliam, my 18-year-old great-great-uncle, when he was sitting in Richmond's St. Paul's Church on April 2, 1865.

When a messenger entered St. Paul's

and quietly handed Jefferson Davis a note, Robert, realizing something was up, walked over to the offices of the Treasury, where he was a clerk and messenger. Other clerks were already engaged in packing the contents to be removed from soon-to-burn Richmond. At midnight, Robert left Richmond for Danville, Virginia, accompanying the Confederacy's money, a journey that took the young man, by foot, steamer, and train, through Virginia and the Carolinas and into Georgia. One thing I noticed: These are the reminiscences of a man who knew hunger. He did go crabbing in Hilton Head and buy the first canned goods he had ever seen from an Army sutler.

"These were luxuries to us who had passed through years of semi-starvation," he remembered.

I believe Robert, who wrote his account many years later, probably did so as part of an effort to clear up certain nagging questions about the end of the Confederate Treasury and, indeed, of the Confederacy itself. He asserted that the last Confederate cabinet meeting was in Abbeville, South Carolina (claims are made for other locations), and recalls that the money was turned over to General Basil W. Duke, commander of Davis's final escort. In Washington, Georgia, Robert and his traveling companions first heard of General Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox from a Confederate congressman, probably Henry Stuart Foote of Tennessee.

"Someone suggested a coat of tar and feathers for Foote for circulating what we believed to be a false report," wrote Robert. After the Civil War, he went on to become a successful lawyer in Petersburg, Virginia, and the bulk of the Confederate Treasury was lost, though treasure hunters continue to search for it.

I love having Robert Gilliam's reminiscences: My grandfather grew up in his house, and I grew up in my grandfather's house. If you come from a family that really *did* try to save Confederate money, you probably won't be too judgmental. I am hoping that in this year of remembering, more people will try, as the Museum of the Confederacy does, to be humble in the face of history. ♦

PICTURE HISTORY / NEWS.COM

The Prophet Conrad

How 'The Secret Agent' anticipates the perils of today.

BY ELIZABETH POWERS

Liberals deny that they are unconcerned about Islamic terrorism.

They insist, instead, that it is not the extraordinary threat claimed by conservatives. Thus, back in 2004, John Kerry promised to treat terrorism as one would illegal gambling or prostitution, as common criminal activity. Gordon Brown made the same case when he pronounced that “terrorism is not a cause; it is a crime.” This legalistic approach, favored by the Obama administration, is not surprising, since contemporary liberalism has gained its institutional success through the courts. Though I cannot date it precisely, but certainly since September 11, 2001, liberals have been consumed by a different vision of terror—namely, worldwide disaster caused by global warming.

At the same time, it would seem that most Americans don’t think very much about terrorism or environmental destruction at all, and conservatives, in our wish to impress on Americans the threat represented by Islamic terrorism, may seem as hyperbolic as Al Gore in his pronouncements about climate. While further attacks on the magnitude of 9/11 are not inconceivable, nearly 10 years down the road it appears that complacency reigns among Americans. And despite the continuing number of incidents around the world associated with terrorism, and the deaths of our servicemen and women in the Middle East, the danger seems far from the minds of most people.

It is difficult to know whether Americans might be more engaged had George W. Bush not chosen (in Norman

Podhoretz’s words) “the path of euphemism and indirection” to describe this ideological threat. There is, however, an unwillingness—an innate inertia, even—to grapple with potential dangers until our own lives are directly affected. We call this attitude “appeasement” in our political leaders, but it is a perennial element in human character that, despite all advances in technology and living standards, is remarkably constant. People simply expect life to continue more or less as it is, without the sudden or abrupt transformations that take place in movies or novels.

Moreover, for over half a century, Western nations have eliminated many of the routine catastrophes that previous generations faced with something approaching fatalism. It is not that the West’s material achievements have made us complacent, as Marxist doctrine would have it, but that Western nations have simply institutionalized this native human tendency, allowing citizens to pursue their own good and thereby increase the wealth of nations. Some individuals, however, both within the West and outside it, enamored with an ideal, are unhappy about this state of affairs. And though it appeared over a century ago, Joseph Conrad’s *The Secret Agent* (1907) offers striking parallels to the threat such individuals pose to the West’s liberal societies, and to the complacency of ordinary people in the face of their threat.

Monitoring this threat is the task of Conrad’s Chief Inspector Heat of the Special Crimes Department, “principal expert in anarchist procedure.” Heat, unlike today’s liberals, has no illusion that these potential terrorists can be treated like criminals. In his eyes, criminals have the same mind and instincts as policemen: “Both recognize the same

conventions, and have a working knowledge of each other’s methods and of the routine of their respective trades.” They are products of the same machine: “One classed as useful and the other as noxious, they take the machine for granted in different ways.” Thus, “the world of thieves—sane, without morbid ideals, working by routine, respectful of constituted authorities, free from all taint of hate and despair.” Not so the anarchist terrorists, none of whom had “half the spunk of this or that burglar he had known. Not half—not one tenth.”

Indeed, like contemporary terrorists *before* they explode their destructive devices, the radicals in *The Secret Agent* are a motley, ineffectual crew, spouting in foreign accents the mash of socialism, anarchism, materialism, and humanitarianism that can be heard today on any college campus or left-wing website. We first meet them in the parlor of Mr. Verloc, “a seller of shady wares” and a man of dubious past, who is a double agent, in the pay of a foreign government to be understood as Russia. At the start of the novel his paymaster, Mr. Vladimir, wants Verloc to commit an act that will shock Britain out of its absurd and “sentimental regard for individual liberty”—in other words, its respect for civil rights. As John Merriman points out in *The Dynamite Club*, his recent study of 19th-century French anarchism, draconian police measures on the continent had led to a mass immigration of radicals to England, where they could meet and publish their views with relative impunity. It is this legalized respect that keeps Inspector Heat from locking up the disgruntled individuals who would be in jail in their countries of origin had they not found a home in London. So, a century ago, the enemies of civil society had learned to manipulate the West’s institutionalized freedoms.

Mr. Verloc’s task is to set off a bomb at the Greenwich Observatory; otherwise, he will forfeit his lucrative income from the foreign embassy. The person who supplies Verloc with the explosive material is the thoroughly nihilist “Professor,” an “unwholesome-looking little moral agent of destruction,” whose aim is the total destruction of “what is.” In

Elizabeth Powers is editing a collection of essays on the intellectual origins of freedom of speech in the 18th century.

the Professor's estimation, his superiority to the social order comes from its dependence "on life . . . whereas I depend on death." Suicide bomber-like, he wears on his person a thick glass flask containing an explosive substance, which he will detonate (and thereby kill dozens of innocent Londoners who happen to be in his vicinity) if the police attempt to lay hands on him.

No doubt, it would have seemed abominable to a Western liberal like Conrad for a man to send his own son on such a dangerous mission but, in perhaps the most striking similarity with the behavior of contemporary terrorists, Verloc enlists the young brother of his wife for the task of placing the explosive device. Verloc counts on the boy escaping, but the blindly docile and devoted Stevie is of limited intelligence and sets off the device ahead of time, thus blowing himself to smithereens: "Limbs, gravel, clothing, bones, splinters—all mixed up together. I tell you they had to fetch a shovel to gather him up with."

So far, so very familiar, despite the gas lamps and horse-drawn carriages (the time is 1886). Also familiar, despite the passage of a century, are the domestic effects of tragedy, to which Conrad devotes equal space. After all, a person killed by a terrorist, if a man, is a son or brother, perhaps a husband and father as well. Thus, Winnie Verloc, the sister of Stevie who has invested all her maternal feeling in protecting him and, indeed, sacrificed other more advantageous prospects by her marriage to Mr. Verloc.

Up until the event that ruptures the domestic tranquility, however, Mrs. Verloc has been decidedly complacent, even though the group of radicals gathers for meetings in her own parlor. The year 1886, recall, was the year of the Haymarket riot in Chicago, which gave rise to the image of the bomb-throwing anarchist. She knows that her husband is in the pay of an "embassy," and that he makes occasional trips abroad, behavior that is surely "foreign to the standards of her class." Nevertheless,

from her first appearance in the novel, as Mrs. Verloc stands behind the counter of her husband's shop, Conrad has stressed her resistance to noticing what is under her eyes, even as the discussions of her husband's associates trouble her impressionable brother. She is described as "steady-eyed," preserving an air of "unfathomable indifference" to customers, and especially to the "shamelessly inviting eyes" of Comrade Ossipon, one of the radicals, "whose glance had a corrupt clearness sufficient to enlighten any

down as he is with carrying out a task he is not up to, he is on the brink at one point, before it has occurred to him to make use of Stevie, of revealing all to his wife. In a not unusual domestic hesitation, however, he forbears:

Mr. Verloc loved his wife as a wife should be loved—that is, maritally, with the regard one has for one's chief possession. This head arranged for the night, those ample shoulders, had an aspect of familiar sacredness—the sacredness of domestic peace.

Had Mr. Verloc been loquacious about his feelings, Stevie would have been saved. But Mrs. Verloc was no feminist *avant la lettre*, demanding to know what weighed on her husband's bosom. Three times in this same chapter she is described, with only slight variation, as confirmed in her belief "that things did not stand being looked into." And so the tragedy occurs, though not before our eyes. It is through her reaction, in the latter half of the novel, that we experience the full horror of the revelation, as Mrs. Verloc, "who always refrained from looking deep into things, was compelled to look into the very bottom of this thing."

Conrad does not fault Mrs. Verloc for her complacency. His novelistic gaze rests impartially on the different circles of society, from high to low, along with those individuals who are constitutionally dissatisfied with the circumstances modernity has forced

on us all, who are so contemptuous of the human condition that they would destroy society down to its foundations in order to erect one that conforms to their own imagination.

Even in perilous times, however, people do not expect the world to end. For Winnie Verloc, life will never be the same, but Conrad allows "the Professor"—his homemade explosive device strapped to his body—a remarkable insight concerning the futility of his nihilistic endeavor:

Lost in the crowd, miserable and undersized, he meditated confidently on his power, keeping his hand in the left pocket of his trousers,



Joseph Conrad, 1923

woman not absolutely imbecile." For this woman of "unfathomable reserve," her principle is to ignore anything affecting "the inwardness of things." Her philosophy consists "in not taking notice of the inside of facts." Later, Conrad says of her: "Mrs. Verloc wasted no portion of this transient life in seeking for fundamental information."

Since the smooth and untroubled functioning of the domestic sphere (so she believes) guarantees Stevie's security, she is alert to the peculiar frame of mind her husband displays after his visit with Mr. Vladimir: "The taciturnity of Mr. Verloc had been lying heavily upon her for a good many days." Weighed

grasping lightly the india-rubber ball, the supreme guarantee of his sinister freedom; but after a while he became disagreeably affected by the sight of the roadway thronged with vehicles and of the pavement crowded with men and women. He was in a long, straight street, peopled by a mere fraction of an immense multitude; but all round him, on and on, even to the limits of the horizon hidden by the enormous piles of bricks, he felt the mass of mankind mighty in its numbers. They swarmed numerous like locusts, industrious like ants, thoughtless like a natural force, pushing on blind and orderly and absorbed, impervious to sentiment, to logic, to terror, too, perhaps.

That was the form of doubt he feared most. Impervious to fear! Often while walking abroad, when he happened also to come out of himself, he had such moments of dreadful and sane mistrust of mankind. What if nothing could move them?

Such is our own complacency since the attacks of September 11, 2001. On that day, and for some time thereafter, one might have felt that life would never be the same. But the feeling has worn off, and for most of us, life is not much different. We are, after all, able to go about our lives in peace, unconcerned about threats to that peace.

There is no easy lesson in this for conservatives. By the start of the 21st century, the generational achievements that have created our way of life—our civil rights, our affluence, our ability to lead our lives without excessive interference from government—have been so absorbed into the mentality of the West that we take them for granted. So is modern democratic society threatened by such internal contradictions, so skillfully portrayed by Joseph Conrad over a century ago? At the same time, we also don't respond well to scolds whose message is a negative one: Don't spread our achievements throughout the world but, instead, renounce, do without. If the continuity of the human condition is what makes people conservative, it is also what keeps them from taking threats seriously. And after the apocalypse has passed them by, they will pick up where they left off. ♦

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Body English

Assessing the Middleton Effect on London's Fashion Week. BY SAMANTHA SAULT



Kate Middleton, Prince William announce their engagement

The fall season of London Fashion Week took place in February, two months before the wedding of Prince William and his longtime girlfriend, Kate Middleton. And so I expected the hype about Buckingham Palace's preparations, and the princess-to-be, to overshadow the city's biannual display of some of the world's most

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innovative runway collections and eclectic street style.

Kate Middleton, after all, is on the cover of tabloids across the globe, and as an attractive and polished woman in the public eye, she's a candidate to have designers at her feet, as William's late mother, Princess Diana did. Or, for that matter, as Michelle Obama does across the pond. A former accessories buyer for a mid-priced British boutique chain, Kate has fashion chops and chooses pitch-perfect outfits, such as the royal

blue silk jersey dress she wore for the engagement announcement, designed by Daniella Helayel of Issa London.

Despite the media obsession with the royal bride and her every feathered fascinators, and the yet-to-be-named designer of her wedding gown, the fashion industry here isn't wholly focused on wooing her. London's insiders seem more dedicated to cementing its place in the world as a creative hub and growing the burgeoning industry. If Kate wears British designers' clothes—such as the now-sold-out Issa London dress—they're thrilled, but they aren't necessarily aiming for the palace in the same way American designers aim for the White House.

On a gray Sunday afternoon, the Royal Courts of Justice crackled with creative energy as a squad of hairstylists, makeup artists, model dressers, and punk-attired assistants prepared for the Vivienne Westwood Red Label show. Dame Vivienne is fashion royalty: Her career took off when she dressed the Sex Pistols in the 1970s, she popularized punk fashion, and invitations to her theatrical runway shows are coveted. While awaiting the designer's arrival backstage, I browsed the racks filled with her fall collection in the Victorian Gothic home of the Law Courts, a fitting venue for a collection paying deliberate homage to Britishness. The looks—vivid British wool and quirky mismatched prints with a dash of British prep—were inspired by British society, from Portobello Road's artisans to (as makeup designer Alex Box told me while painting a rainbow-colored face) “a whimsical portrait of royalty” topped with crown-shaped hair pieces.

When the flame-haired Dame Vivienne, shrouded in a purple and turquoise shawl, swept into the dressing area, burly cameramen and high-heeled reporters mobbed her, wanting to know her thoughts on Topic Number One.

“I would love to have dressed Kate Middleton,” she said, “but I have to wait until she catches up a bit somewhere with style”—adding that she's definitely not designing the wedding dress. Given her penchant for conservative style, Kate Middleton was never likely to wear Vivienne Westwood's clothes, and the

designer did not seem to care. But other designers were more kind to Kate—her traditional wardrobe can surely be attributed, in part, to the need to dress a certain way as she prepares to become a member of the royal family—and a few collections, like Jaeger London's tomato and camel separates and Paul Smith's menswear-inspired tailoring, could work well in her official life. The majority of the runways, however, with over-



Samantha Cameron, Vivienne Westwood

whelming furs, geometric cutouts, and psychedelic prints, were likely too fashion-forward for the future queen. And of all the designers I spoke to or read about here, few even hinted that they would like to dress Kate Middleton, and that included London's multitude of young, hip designers who could benefit from the notoriety. It only takes one piece to help a career skyrocket.

Fashion Week's On/Off exhibition showcases many of these emerging designers. Lee Klabin, who began her career designing couture corsets, showed her third ready-to-wear collection. The fall collection is “grown-up and angular,”

said spokeswoman Charlotte Bishop, and features the designer's signature corset bodices with elegant long gowns, fur coats, and hand-braided leather details. In moderation, the collection *could* work for Princess Kate—although corsets may still be too risqué for the palace. Klabin told me that Meryl Streep and Scarlett Johansson rank highest on her list of women she wants to dress. As Bishop said, women in positions such as Kate Middleton's “have a certain way they need to dress. They can't be known for pushing boundaries.”

Maria Francesca Pepe, a young accessories designer whose work has been worn by Lady Gaga and Rihanna, echoed the sentiment. She showed tribal and futuristic jewelry made of studs, pearls, and crystals, designed primarily for “women in their twenties and thirties who are enjoying fashion.” Although she would love to see Kate wear a “bold, avant-garde” necklace with one of her simple dresses, “it's easier for her to dress more classic” in her role. Pepe thinks women in the public eye should not be criticized for “enjoying beautiful things and supporting young designers” if they choose.

There is a woman in the public eye, however, who is actively supporting young designers and becoming something of an industry fixture: Samantha Cameron, the prime minister's wife. As a British Fashion Council ambassador, she was not only spotted in the front row at shows like Burberry, but she also hosted a party at 10 Downing Street for the industry elite, including Westwood, Helayel, Claudia Schiffer, and top editors. And at every event, Mrs. Cameron wore a wide mix of some of Britain's high-end runway designers and High Street boutiques, including a unique galaxy-print skirt by rising star Christopher Kane.

Samantha Cameron's enthusiasm for the industry is not so she can be showered with designer garments, or sip champagne with powerful editors, but because (as she said at the Fashion Week opening), “It makes more than £20 billion a year for our country. It sends out a really powerful message about British creativity and it employs hundreds of thousands of people.” ♦

PHOTOSHOT / NEWS.COM

Repeat, Hell!

You've seen it all before, but why not again?

BY JOHN PODHORETZ

Battle: Los Angeles, which made a fortune in its opening weekend, explores new depths of meaning when it comes to the word “derivative.” Almost all movies are glosses on previous ones, but there is literally not a second in this one you haven’t already seen in another. It’s *Independence Day* and *The War of the Worlds* and *District 9* and *Saving Private Ryan* and *Transformers* and *Pearl Harbor* and *Starship Troopers* and *Black Hawk Down* and *The Green Berets* and *Rio Bravo* and *Assault on Precinct 13* and *Battleground* and *The Hurt Locker* and *Red Dawn* and I’m sure I’ve missed 40 others all rolled into one.

The nice part is that when it rips off a movie you didn’t like, you just have to wait a minute or two until it moves on to rip off a movie you did like. If *Battle: Los Angeles* were more knowing, it could have presented itself as a postmodern gloss on the power of cinematic clichés. Instead, it functions like *Airplane!*—but in reverse. For while *Airplane!* played its clichés so straight they became hilarious, *Battle: Los Angeles* is in deadly earnest. And oddly enough, that’s why the movie works, even though it has no business working. *Battle: Los Angeles* takes itself seriously, and in presenting its ludicrous and circuitous plot without a smidgen of irony, it manages to build tension, sustain interest, and even give you a little emotional *zetz*.

Battle: Los Angeles is the story of a Marine platoon from Camp Pendleton that finds itself caught up in a fight

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Battle: Los Angeles
Directed by Jonathan Liebesman



against an alien invasion. The aliens are destroying Los Angeles, and it falls to the platoon to rescue some civilians stranded in a police station in an L.A. neighborhood that’s been abandoned. The U.S. military beachhead is at Santa Monica Airport, and the platoon must trundle up Santa Monica Boulevard on foot and get the civilians before the military levels the area west of Lincoln Boulevard toward the ocean. The mission makes no sense unless you’ve seen *Saving Private Ryan*. But then, the mission in *Saving Private Ryan* made no sense, either; but you’re not allowed to criticize *Saving Private Ryan* because to do so is tantamount to spitting on the flag, so I guess I can’t complain about this mission.

The platoon is, of course, beautifully balanced racially and ethnically, the way movie platoons have been since World War II, though instead of Goldberg and Falconetti and Pulaski there is an actor-rapper and two dreamboat Hispanics. Fortunately along the way, the team picks up a Latina Air Force officer, so there’s gender bal-

ance and a little more ethnicity, too!

But there is also tension. Smoldering tension. The tough-as-nails staff sergeant is haunted by what happened in his last mission somewhere in one of those countries—Iraq or Afghanistan, you know, over there where Marines are fighting. Plus, the brother of one of the guys in the platoon was (wouldn’t you know it!) in the platoon commanded by the staff sergeant over there in the last mission. So the brother is kind of bitter. The staff sergeant doesn’t defend himself against the charge he got his men killed because he’s just too heroic.

As are they all. These Marines are tough, they’re resourceful, they’re fun, they’re a little wacky but not too wacky, and they’re completely self-sacrificing. There hasn’t been a portrait of the American military this unabashedly hagiographic since *The Green Berets*. Of course, it helps that they’re fighting an enemy that is seeking to exterminate the entire human race. Plus, the aliens are large bugs. I know Albert

Schweitzer and Jains objected to killing insects, but almost nobody else does, and so writer Chris Bertolini and director Jonathan Liebesman don’t bother with existential debates about the use of force and the role of the military and harsh detainment measures and WikiLeaks and Andrew Sullivan going to *The Daily Beast*.

The Marines fight the aliens in the street. They fight them at the police station. They fight them on the Santa Monica Freeway. They’re outnumbered and outgunned, but they persevere. “Retreat, hell!” they say—though the movie’s script suggests this phrase was used by a Marine in World War I when, in fact, it was Gen. Oliver Smith in Korea. Clearly, Bertolini and Liebesman were too busy screening war movies to do a quick Google search. But they do, after all, say, “Retreat, hell.” And they do fight. And they are self-sacrificing. And brave. And tough. *Battle: Los Angeles* not only takes itself seriously, it takes its Marines seriously.

That’s why, no matter how ridiculous it gets, it still gets to you. ♦

"Renault on Monday offered its 'sincere apologies and regrets' to Michel Balthazard, Bertrand Rochette, and Matthieu Tenenbaum after a key piece of evidence that led to their dismissal in January after accusations of spying on Renault's electric vehicle programme was found by prosecutors to be false."

—Financial Times, March 14, 2011

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Renault Admits Falling for Prank

Carmaker 'punk'd'
by Peugeot

By Jennifer Thompson in Paris

"An elaborate hoax" is what Carlos Ghosn, CEO of Renault, says led him to fire three employees his company suspected of committing industrial espionage. "Our security force received a tip-off about three individuals and their Swiss bank accounts, and we thought we had better move fast before one of our rivals gets hold of some very classified documents," explained Ghosn. "We know how jealous Mercedes and Porsche are of Renault. They want what we've got."

"What've they got?" asked a Mercedes spokesperson. "Wait. Let me guess. A car that goes back to the future when it travels faster than 88 miles per hour? *Bitte*, don't waste my time." Likewise, Porsche CEO Matthias Mueller scoffed. "Stealing secrets from Renault? Sure. We also have spies at Yugo." As it turns out, the culprit of this "elaborate hoax" is the division of opposition research at French automotive rival Peugeot. "They got totally punk'd!" bragged one of the pranksters who asked to remain nameless. "It was so easy, too.



Renault's Carlos Ghosn calls Porsche a "rival." Seriously?

NEWSCOM

All I did was call them and use this really deep voice. And they fell for it. We punk'd their a—!" (The American television program "Punk'd" has become a popular hit in France, along with "The Michael Richards Show.")

Understandably, Ghosn and his associates are embarrassed, but they refuse to admit they were conned so easily. "The voice on that phone was very authoritative," insisted the chief executive. "You would have believed him, too, had you heard him.

He sounded like a wealthy Nigerian in need of a bank account." Ghosn had to cut short his interview with FT, however, when he stumbled over an email from an acquaintance in dire straits. "Oh dear," he said. "My friend was robbed at gunpoint while traveling with his family in Scotland! Bags, cash, credit cards—all gone! Now if you'll excuse me, I need to wire over enough funds

Continued on A7

Obama admits mistakes

Blames advisers for
bad NCAA picks

and Gonzaga over St. John's. The two the President missed were Louisville over Morehead State (which we all



the weekly
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